

British Columbia: A Very Special Issue

JUNE 1973

CANADA'S NATIONAL MAGAZINE



50¢

# Macleans

The Pacific side of paradise  
Eccentricity as a way of life  
David Barrett & other miracles



New Horizons: Highs and lows in lotus land



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## THE VIEW FROM HERE

### Not So Much A Province; More A Way Of Life

BY PETER C. NEWMAN

British Columbians like to think of their province as a large body of land entirely surrounded by water. Eric Nicol wrote in this magazine the last time *Melhorn's* devoted a whole issue to Canada's Pacific rim 15 years ago. BC has changed a great deal in the interim. But I suspect that Nicol's observations still hold true. Most of us not lucky enough to live there have at least vaguely considered running away to BC, spurred on by a growing jealousy of those who actually make the move west.

The qualities of BC life that prompt this kind of response aren't simple to define, though there may be a clue in the common thread that runs through the articles of the 15 BC writers whose contributions make up this issue: that British Columbia is Canada's spiritual, as well as geographic, frontier. It is in this sense of frontier which provides the most appropriate BC's very own brand of "nationalism."

As Allen Gair and Bob Waller point out in the article that leads off this issue, the tourism man's main point "that British Columbia is a frontier." When you're breaking new ground, whether it's the land around you or your own life, you ignore tradition. Here we make our own rules. And in our imagination, with the spirit of a pioneer doing that develops in any frontier, we know that everything out there has been placed there just for us. The way we treat it is the right way, the only way. "Frontier is places for states of mind to escape to—lands (or ways of life) to lose and find yourself in. Living on a frontier implies existing on the edge of undiscovered potential," as you'd say as well as your environment. It is this kind of inner excitement that is making British Columbia the source of some of this country's most vital literature, a literature few outsiders even know about. And it is this same kind of creativity that should be harnessed by Ottawa to help enrich BC more often in Canadian, national — as distinct from provincial — context. Yet too long our federal government,

compensated the rest of the country over since a first grand Confederation in 1871. Its boosters have been known to act like widowed ambassadors from some misty Shangri-la beyond the Rockies, merely trying to show their non-attachment to money and power's country, dismissing suggested qualifications as snails not just on their taste but on their better, such combative (rebel) such character as BC "nationalism" reflects the fact that in British Columbia, nothing is done by halves. After 20 years of having the country's most hard-core conservative administration, last year BC elected the only truly socialist government in the continent. The province has the most advanced prison system in the country — and one of the highest crime rates, the highest percentage of unskilled workers, and the most repressive labor legislation in the Commonwealth — one of the highest marriage (and divorce) rates per capita, the most advanced social services and 54% of the nation's drug addicts. It is the fastest-growing of all the provinces yet still the emptiest in its outskirts.

British Columbia has variously been described as the most British and most American of Canada's provinces. But as Robert Harlow points out in his brilliant analysis which begins on page 40 "Actually it is the most Canadian." It's this concentrated Canadian-ness that makes it essential that the rest of the country pay heed — and not just pay — to this very special province on our Pacific rim. ■

#### MACLEAN'S

#### CONTENTS

VOL. 86 NO. 6 JUNE 1973

4 ENERGY: That pipeline is on the wrong track	GORDON GIBSON
11 POLITICS: A Socialist in Dow Jones clothing	ALLAN FOTHERINGHAM
12 THE VIEW FROM BC: The great Columbia gateway	PATRICK L. MCGEE
14 BUSINESS: The branch plant that look not	BRUCE YOUNG
16 YOUR VIEW: Our readers' opinions	
27 THE PACIFIC PERSUASION: On the western frontier, is Latin Canada	ALLEN GAIR AND BOB WALLER
32 A SOCIALIST IN THE LAND OF PLENTY: David Bennett's rise to top banana	ALLAN FOTHERINGHAM
34 COASTSCAPE: People and the land in a state of grace	RODNEY HAUG-BROWN
38 PROTEST IN PARADISE: Ben Metcalfe as a state more individual than most	PHYLLIS WEBB
40 LAST TANGO IN PRINCE GEORGE: Ethics down from the BC landscape	ROBERT HARLOW
41 BC MYths: A portfolio of indigenous lifestyles	MICHAEL FORSTER AND EVE ROCKETT
47 THE ART OF THE WERFOOT: Baseball, poetry and other cultures	GEORGE BOWRING
50 SETTLING INTO INVERMERE, BC: A country big enough for a lifetime of changes	DANIEL ZEROTH
58 TELEVISION: Gaze up back our screens	HEATHER ROBERTSON
60 FILMS: Making it big by being truly awful	JOHN HORSBESS
62 RADIO: Running off at the supermouth	CLIVE DOCKING
64 THEATRE: A conflict of dramatic interest	PETER MAY
66 BOOKS: Getting away from it all	GEORGE WOODCOCK

COVER: Token sculpture of David Bennett: Judy Latham and W.A.C. Bennett and photograph by Paul Gader

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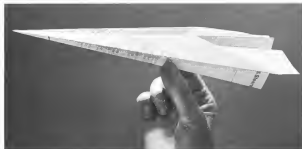
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BY GORDON GIBSON



The Mackenzie Valley Railway

## That Pipeline Is On The Wrong Track

It won't even handle oil and gas simultaneously as facilities needn't be doubled.

The Queen's University group checked out several possible routes, one of them being the historic Frank Carleton's Prairie River flume proposal in Washington last March. It was discarded not only because it would be expensive to build, but also because it

would serve only the Prudhoe Bay reserves, not putting through the Mackenzie Delta area where the Canadian reserves are. Obviously, a railway should handle Canadian reserves too.

That leaves the Mackenzie Valley Railway Line. The Mackenzie Valley is going to be a big part of our future. It's a viable pipe route for thousands of square miles, following the river a thousand miles from the Great Slave Lake to the Arctic Ocean. The valley is flat. Extending from the ocean south more than 1,500 miles, the rise in elevation is only 900 feet—made easier by the river.

The Mackenzie Valley contains several thousand residents, most of them Indians living in small communities along the river. Beyond these communities grow the Canadian wilderness of slow growing forests, ancient caribou, fox and rabbit all existing peacefully in a subarctic environment.

It is a quiet land, and cold. As long as the permafrost remains frozen the precarious balance that supports life is maintained. But a slight disturbance in ground cover can transform a solid plain into a sea of mud within a single year when it snow and softens.

Oil traveling at a hot 160 degrees is

Gordon Gibson is a columnist for the *Pittsburgh Star*.

potential trouble. There is no problem with a railway line, and we, in Canada, know as much as anyone can know about northern railways. Both the line to Churchill and the Quebec one are routes penetrate well into the permafrost and Arctic opening winter travel. What is new is putting our proven northern railway expertise to work on a solution to the resources problem.

Because of environmental and construction problems, pipelines built in a permafrost setting will end up at four times as much as those built farther south, but a railway line can be constructed at only a little more expense because, in this case, it is easy railway country. And because it is wilderness—fewer problems in acquiring rights of way, no costly land surveys. With a rail-rail concept the railway can be closed loop, filling in one end and emptying at the other. It is more than competitive with a pipeline's volume capacity because of speed. Oil moves through a pipeline at about five miles an hour; a train barrels along at at least 30 miles per hour and the diameter of a tank car is broader than pipelines. In other words, the proposed 48-inch pipeline could carry one million barrels of oil a day in one train. This could be equaled by 19 trains, each not quite two miles long, spaced a little more than an hour apart.

As for the gas, it would be liquefied for rail travel, reducing the volume 600 times. Using the method and timing per day would be equal to a 48-inch pipeline carrying natural gas.

The whole project would amount to 1,240 miles of double track stretching from the southern terminus in Prudhoe Bay plus a 140-mile connecting link to the Great Slave Lake. Railway for construction supply. The route would be generally down the Mackenzie and then along the Arctic coastline to Prudhoe, along a route designed to maximize environmental damage. According to the Queen's University group, the project would be fully operational in five years.

After putting faster shipping costs as heavy as lead in the case of pipelines, but rail costs are easily checked. If before the railway system from Trossa Bay to Prudhoe could be built for \$2.4 billion, with a pipe connection to Edmonton in \$400 million for a total of \$3.2 billion—compared to a conservative five billion-dollar cost of an equivalent pipeline.

And even a railway system has been built its capacity could be reached by simply adding more trains.

All of this is based on the feasibility study by the Queen's University group. It's time to take a hard look at this pipeline. If there is a simpler way it should be explored. ■

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Yet, we're improving our service and equipment wherever we can. For example, new Dayliner cars are

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Canada

The voters of Vancouver seem to grow bored rather easily with the politicians they have elected as mayor.

Those political headbangers who do reject proposals on Narrows-by-the-Pacific are fond of pointing out that Vancouver long ago perfected the theory now emerging at this level of government (only Trudelo, Turner and Stanfield) only the extremely wealthy are fit for high political office.

Five of the five past mayors in fact have been of millionaire rank. They ranged from a charming old gentleman who had the habit of getting thoroughly shocked whenever Queen Elizabeth showed in town for a joint appearance with him to a socialist schoolteacher who simply deserted his philosophical base once draped in the robes of power.

The latest example of the short attention span of voters has been the abrupt electoral distance for the thirty-year-old Tom Campbell, who served for a while but then applied for a longer while with his hyperbolic, anti-youth line. In reaction, the city has turned to a careful, clean-cut figure right out of a 1970s class on politics. Art Phillips, who is tall and handsome and pleasant and in favor of all the in-uses of the day—green space and malls and bicycle paths.

Phillips, like Campbell, acquired his million net before 40 in that effortless way that always puzzles the rest of us but that the wealthy only. While the socialist Campbell picked from self-induced crisis to cross like a manatee, Phillips carefully plotted his way to the mayor's chair with such careful maneuvering that by the time his name appeared on the ballot there were no rivals to challenge him. He is so skillful at making his real personality that one commentator was forced to require in print whether Vancouver was about to get Plutonic Art Traditional Art or Modern Art.

What is clear is that while the accepted Canadian mayor of the 1960s was Jean Drapreau with his spectacular personality, cities seem to want a new type of leader for the 1970s. The 42-year-old Phillips and Toronto's 36-year-old David Crombie both products of middle-class reform movements are the type, unless all specious cool reactions to the old blue-eyes-and-brown-hair style of old politicians.

Phillips already tried his accession to power with the growing public mood against developers and growth-at-any-cost. Reform of the Vancouver civic structure was long overdue: since city hall had been ruled for 35 years by the business-oriented "Main Portion As Usual," an arrogant clique founded during the Depression to keep the CCP from gaining control of city hall.

## POLITICS

BY ALLAN FOTHERINGHAM



Vancouver's Art Phillips

### A Socialist In Dow Jones Clothing

Phillips was a founding member of TEAM (The Election Action Movement) in the late Sixties, squared into office as a reformer on better sidewalks on the poll and then held his time, waiting for Tom Tomlin's appeal to fade.

To head off any possible competition, Phillips declared his candidacy right at the start of 1972 for an unprecedented year-long run at the mayor's chair. He also spent some \$30,000—further discouraging rivals—and starred in slick luxury TV ads that were carefully prepared in a studio that borrowed from neighboring Washington State with the use of a color-cube programming that would reach the Vancouver audience Phillips needed to win.

By the time election day came around last December, there wasn't a serious candidate in sight and the baby-faced millionaire walked away with 78% of the vote.

The TEAM organization which he led to a sweep at the polls is deliberate upper middle class in its membership, many university professors and academics who had sprung out at the complacent NPA selling out to developers. In the group investment counselor Phillips (the speculator is a poor person's giant) is the only one with downtown business connections, comparing London to the "socialist" in "Dow Jones clothing." During his election campaign he voluntarily disclosed his private holdings, revealing his personal worth at \$15 million.

The double within TEAM about Phillips' decency as a reformer came soon

before his election when he began to edge into the middle of the political stream in *La Courne's Guide To City Politics*, the devastating book put out last year, by Toronto writer-critic James Laverne, the author analyzed Phillips' voting record and in fact laid him with the property interests.

If there was ever a city in need of a good dose of a genuine reform mayor it is Vancouver, filled with one of the most rapidly changing in the world and a main-made civic core that has been described as "Moore law-with-mountains." The city is so young (only 87 years old) that the mayor mistakes that have led to many North American cities can be made.

Violent public reaction—fueled by the early TEAM movement—has managed to kill off downtown freeways and some of the more outrageous development proposed for heavy transit along downtown corridors. But the "Machinization of the narrow downtown peninsula is still a threat and Phillips has the power on council—one of the 11 seats held by TEAM—plus a more sympathetic NDP government in Victoria to let changes in it.

So far he has concentrated on external uses of power. A man who doesn't wear suits ("Conformity is not my thing"), he has dispensed of his policeman bodyguard-chef-friend, shunned such civic functions and has a \$12,000-a-year personal assistant drive the civic limo. He won't wear the mayor's robes or chain and medals on being called "Mr. Mayor" rather than "Your Worship."

He is a longtime supporter of Eric Kierulff, a son of Milton Friedman, the radical conservative economist, and has recently discovered Jane Jacobs, the planning critic now living in Toronto and says "I guess you could say I'm eclectic in my views." He has tried once for election as a Liberal and some feel he has real goal is leader of the BC Liberals. For once the reaction to the present socialist government was in.

Already Phillips has been in some demand across Canada as a speaker at other cities with their curiosity over this new Mr. Clean based of mayor that has sprung up. Perhaps we expect so much of him because he expresses—as Crombie does in Toronto—all that the new political class demands. Perhaps we expect too much and as another "ideal" candidate in London or New York, discovered the problems of the city are too much for any one leader.

"The man who has everything and looks it" should have no trouble at least with his own budget of \$300 million. His own municipal lion administration at least of more than \$200 million. We see if he's as consistent with people as he is with stocks. ■

Allan Fotheringham is a columnist for the Vancouver Sun.

As you drive along the Kootenay lakeshore in northern British Columbia, you see summer cottages nestling into a sandy bay, mail boats idling for Kootenay salmon, postcard fronts along toward the water. As the road chimes there are breathtaking views of the lake far below. When you reach the northern tip of Kootenay Lake, you take a short, steeply climb up to the tiny grass slopes at the Duncan Basin. From the viewing platform, you can see peacefully sunken forest edges far that than distance before Duncan Lake takes a westerly bend behind the mountains.

But if you stop to question any of the local residents about this lovely Loch, they'll probably suggest you drive up the old highway. It is as discouraged now, and it's difficult to find. An unmarked road leads across a wooden bridge below the dam. You take this and bear left, making your way up a rocky track along the far side of the lake and pause at a promontory just as you reach the bend.

There, as far as you can see, is a gloom. Closely clustered of trees grace the stagnant water. A half-dozen outcrops of sand before the rocky bank. A forested island in the distance supports a single dead tree and a sitting cabin, a bay, choked with tangled debris is walked off by a log boom.

The contrast, which hits you like a hammer, encompasses the whole of the Columbia River Provincial, which created it: the glossy superficial frosting, the ugly realities hidden just out of sight, and the efforts to conceal the mess from the Canadian people. The Columbia River Treaty is a hole in the throne of environmentalism, and now we are appalled to find it from the beginning.

A symbolic, rain-dampened ceremony was held at the Peace Arch near Blaine, Washington, in September of 1984, to mark the ratification of the Treaty. President Ronald Reagan was there and Prime Minister Lester Pearson, and last but not least, Premier W. A. C. Bennett. A symbolic cheque for \$223,291,661.24 was presented to Canada. The actual transfer of money was arranged in New York City, where it was leaked locally that the cheque was being mailed to the bank for deposit before closing time that putting an extra day's interest of \$20,000. It was symptomatic of the money-grubbing greed-rich quick actions of the Canadian government.

In addition to the \$223,291,661.24 million downpayment the Americans paid a further \$75 million in flood control and other benefits to complete their part of the bargain (and it was, to them, a bargain). We have a commitment to build three dams in British Columbia—Duncan, High Arrow and Mica—and we have an agreement permitting the U.S. to build another dam at Libby, Missis-



Will Trudeau Regret?

## The Great Columbia Giveaway

sippi, which will flood more Canadian territory. We have a contract to regulate the Columbia and Kootenay River flow for flood protection forever.

These monstrous concessions were agreed to for a short term gain and to get cheaper hydroelectric power in the future. But as it has turned out, there won't even be a short-term gain, because there will be an enormous loss for the Canadian negotiators not only give the Columbia away they subverted the Americans in the process.

Bennett promised the people of British Columbia, during the 1960 election, that the sale of downstream benefits would pay for the three treaty dams with \$55 million left over as pay for half the cost of installing generators at the Mica Dam. Since two of the three treaty dams—Duncan and High Arrow—provide only nominal benefit to Canada, the only conceivable excuse for the agreement was the promised profit on Mica. Now the awful truth is beginning to emerge. The people of British Columbia who wind up contributing more than \$300 million to reach what seem to have been the whole thrust of the Bennett promise. And the Americans will wind up paying for half the public works that was implied in the agreement.

Mica Dam is the only project Canada really wanted. It will cost approximately \$990 million of the not more than \$100 million will have come from the Columbia River Treaty monies, meaning that Columbia River power from Mica will be only slightly cheaper as a

result of the treaty. That may be the only benefit Canada will have to offset all that has been given up.

While proof of Canada's blundering on the Columbia River was in coming, the acceptance of environmental destruction was obvious from the start. Incidents underlying this dismal aspect of the whole development have seemed attempts at downplay of the environmental damage. One in Duncan in 1967 occurred after plans of the influential Social Credit funds were down in for the occasion. Before their arrival the area surrounding the dam was given over with hard costs. Premier Bennett told the crowd that "in Duncan Lake there has been created a haven for pleasure boats, beaches for swimming, a place where forever we will find physical and mental benefits." It was Bennett's constant desire to convert opposition members to corporate approval, but Randolph Macdonald, NDP member representing the dam constituency came away, saying with the crowd and seeing members of the press up the small dirt road on the far side of the dam so they could see for themselves the destruction.

Although Premier David Barrett has consistently played down parts of conflict between Ottawa and Victoria, it could be that the controversy over the Columbia River Treaty will start the old war raging again. In his first meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau, Barrett asked informally to have the treaty supported with the U.S. The Prime Minister dismissed the request, saying in effect, "it was laugh talk for the promise. The financial terms were set by the old board of government and Ottawa wasn't going to get running in Washington now."

But Barrett has a strong political case and the matter will not likely be dropped. Despite terms of the agreement between Ottawa and Victoria, the Columbia River Treaty was finally notified by the BC legislature. Finally the agreement specifies that the federal government should act in the request of the province, present to Washington any claim decided by the Canadian saying treaty of any article in the treaty.

The Columbia River Treaty represents so much of what has been wrong with Canada for it to be dismissed today with a federal shrug. It was one of Canada's greatest negotiating disasters and means that a centralized, strong policy should not be. That is a policy which Canada provides the resource, controls the land, provides the ecological damage, and in the end finds that politicians have allowed it to be sold for a fraction of its true value. The treaty is a new political value in the determination to seek recognition of inter-related arrangements of which the Columbia River Treaty is a prime example. ■

Dr. Patrick McGeer, M.L.A., is former member of the BC Liberal Party.

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BY BRUCE YOUNG



James Hutchinson

## The Branch Plant That Took Root

Quadrus Manufacturing is building chain saws at the rate of 25,000 a year at its fledgling Trail, B.C. plant and has finally climbed out of the red. It wouldn't have meant much, except for the irony that British Columbia, where an entire provincial economy depends on the forest industries, was having difficulty producing its own chain saws. Quadrus' modest success — several in this case mean success — is what one happens when a group of Canadian businessmen decide that their American head office has underperformed. That they can get it alone. But a wasn't mere flag-waving that prompted James Hutchinson to quit a nice, comfortable job as general manager of Power Machinery Ltd., three years ago. He was simply incensed at what he thought a stupid and wasteful and totally arbitrary decision made by his owners in Chicago: the mighty Skid Corporation.

Power Machinery Ltd. was never a high-potential company, although it did employ 140 men, and its Canadian line of chain saws was gaining respect. But according to Hutchinson, Skid had been in a 1970 slide of its own electric tools was down and there were layoffs in the Chicago plant. One way to cut down on layoffs affecting good American workers, the Skid executives decided, would be to transfer the struggling Canadian subsidiary down to Chicago. They chose to absorb a few of the 140 Canadian workers who might be willing to expatriate themselves, but it would be a small price to pay.

That was when Hutchinson got a memo from Chicago instructing him to take over the plant. He got it to his office, a hunker and took it to Chicago. Hutchinson refused, and quit. He admits that if he had been convinced it was a sound business decision he'd probably have done it. "I'm a humanitarian. If it had been reasonable to leave Vancouver, I would have gone. The people in Vancouver would have deserved to have lost their jobs." But he felt it was a bad move, merely a cynical scheme to butter layoffs on Illinois. And when he got his job, 11 other men from the level of foreman up — quit too, in sympathy. They did what men everywhere do under the circumstances: they held a wake.

It was at Hutchinson's home, and as the men drank and gaped among themselves they began to realize that they were staying the point. There, in that house, growing over self-inflicted loss of jobs, was a group of men whose experience and experience was a valuable marketable commodity of their track together. It was at that instant that Quadrus Manufacturing, as it formerly chain saws, were conceived.

Now that Quadrus is the black Hutchinson explains it all with engaging

simplicity. "Skid wanted a loan," he says. "We talked it into a thirty-million." What had come from that wake in his home three years ago was the realization that "you could never replace the working relationship that had been built up. The tooling could be duplicated but not the 140 people. You build a business with people. You build the people, and then the people will build the business for you."

The men formed a company, and agreed not to look for long-term employment, but to take only jobs that would fit in with their plans to stay in Vancouver. That meant some of them took on part-time duties and stuck with them for two years. It was important that the whole thing be done without pretense without doing "PR, in a staff business community," says Hutchinson, "and it pays to keep your affairs in touch away that you can view them in public."

But there they were, with no money, no back getting any, and in idea that really didn't look all that attractive viewed through the cold eye of the investor. Skid did eventually move its machinery down to Chicago of course, and they even started producing a chain saw. All Hutchinson had to offer was an idea, a group of men who had once worked together. Finally he gave up on Vancouver. Then he discovered Trail is competing town in the Kootenay country which is the only area in British Columbia that qualifies for federal regional economic development grants.

It was the Kootenay Industrial Development Association (KIDA), a public

body sponsored by Trail area businessmen, which brought Hutchinson together with the government. KIDA had been set up with the vision of getting new industry in located in Trail, and Hutchinson — potentially — was new industry. Ottawa approved a \$178,000 grant providing KIDA and Hutchinson could raise another \$225,000 and KIDA's go-getters went to work. Some 250 Trail citizens, in the next few months, acquired \$225,000 worth of shares, at \$500 each, for a 45% interest in the firm. Long-term non-acquity financing was arranged through the Kootenay Credit Union. Hutchinson credited Hutchinson at one point with a straight loan of several thousand dollars. "They just gave it to me," says Hutchinson. "I had full control of the money — I could have taken off to Bermuda. I could have gone anywhere. There were no legal agreements — you thank them."

By March 1972 it was time to break ground for the new plant. The tooling program was in its final stages in Vancouver and it was time to get into production. There were more problems during the building of the plant, but these were more resolved, suppliers extended instead of lost of credit. One corporation even loaned executives from time to time.

All of this means that it's nice if a community is behind you in business and Trail was certainly behind the Quadrus venture. Common had limited Trail into a factory town of 13,000 with a captive labor force that couldn't grow. Production has been accelerated over the past decade, meaning loss of jobs by attrition when men died or retired. They simply weren't replaced. Employment dropped by close to 1,000 leaving 2,900 employees still with Comstock. The young were leaving town. The town seemed doomed to shrink.

Quadrus employs only 55 (including 10 of the original 11) and it has brought badly needed diversification. Mayor Francis "Buddy" DeVries the town themselves, explain that "we didn't want to become another Kamloops." In other words, diversification, as the type of boom-or-bust growth another primary industry might bring.

What does it all mean? All that fun and financing over a tax and a half pound chain saw that isn't big enough to star down a responsible BC firm?

Well, for a start it means 55 men are working at jobs they themselves created. But beyond that is the lesson they learned about foreign ownership, it's not a viable and it isn't unattractive. That's how they came back from the Americans but that the decisions which make it possible will be made not in Washington, New York or Boston — but in Ottawa, Toronto and Trail. ■

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Surely there must be a God who creates a manuscript like John Fadoes — *Last College* (April) — sends his creation to the world and then calls it back when he deems to glory in his works. John Fadoes is an angel!

He has composed a picture of life which makes me realize, for the instant anyway, that life begins when death is at hand. What is there?

VINCENT'S JOURNAL MEMBERSHIP ONT.

## Battles, crises, issues

I am both outraged and depressed to find Rick Salutin's article, *The Great Canadian History* (April) in *Maclean's*. The article is a mixture of clichés, quotations, distortions and half-truths welded together by naive nationalism. Salutin obviously didn't bother to interview or consult with any professional Canadian historians; it's clear that he has no interest in pursuing a fair or accurate description of the state of Canadian history.

I'll deal with only the major failures of the article. The first is Salutin's assertion that we are entering the age of "the New Technocracy in history writing: the new professionals, who don't even try, they do quantitative studies on the American model." Now that is flatly wrong. Where are these new technocrats Salutin's talking about? As a member of the largest Canadian history department in the country, I can't find any of them around here. There are the warring Canadian historians under 35 in our department. One of these does traditional diplomatic history, another has written a history of the Canadian Confederacy in Canada, another has written on urban reform, western representation and the discovery of city slums, another is an activist left nationalist who's working on a book on the working class in the 18th century, my own writings have ranged from studies on the origins of branch plants in Canada to an exploration of Victorian ideas about sexuality in the country. I could go on for pages telling you what the young historians in the country are actually doing — at York, for example. Yet Salutin is working on Ontario resource policy. Much more on intellectuals in the *Depression*, less on Abella to the Canadian labor movement. Hardly anyone in this country is doing "quantitative studies on the American model." The one person who comes to my mind is Michael Katz of OISE, who is an Americanist — but whose work on Hamilton is answering, exactly the kinds of questions Salutin asks about Ontario Canadians? On the country, a number of our colleagues working in other fields of history are quite aware that we lag behind in the use of quantitative methods.

Salutin's discussion of the current state of the literature is ridiculous in detail and in general. To call Robin Winks "the main locus authority these days" is the nonsense, as is the implication that I have had been "generously ignored." Bradley Rymer's *Colonial House* wasn't given much attention because it's not a very good book. Perhaps it's a good thing that French Canadians are now being filled by *La Vie Literaire* or *Monde* France, but of course it's been more than a year since James H. Gray published *Red Lights On The Frontier*. And in a 1979 article, *Pure Books On Amoral Subjects*, I described in great detail pre-French Canadian ideas in Canada and the contents of our first neo-education course.

Salutin is upset that "the people who built the country, and rebuilt it day by day" appear almost nowhere in his account." If Salutin had bothered to check a decent bookstore he might have found out how wrong he is. In December 1971 the University of Toronto Press began publishing the *Second History of Canada* series under my editing. We have now published 12 volumes in paperback. These include a study of working-class Manitoulin in the 1880s, a book on the working and living conditions of the backhouse men who built Canada's railways, J. S. Woodsworth's early books on immigrants and urban problems, and a book of letters written to R. B. Bennett by poor people during the *Depression*. This last book, *The Wretched of Canada*, has drawn attention from even American historians as being virtually a unique memoir from the forgotten people of a society.

Salutin's "discovery" of William Lyon Mackenzie is both pathetic and revealing. We all know about Mackenzie years ago. Bill Kirkcaldy published *The Founders* in 1956; Margaret Barclay her *Selected Writings of William Lyon Mackenzie* in 1961. The rebellion of 1837 has been fought and rebought a dozen times in Canadian history books and the historians who've devoted years of their lives to the study of Mackenzie's career are in general agreement that he was an unaffiliated political leader. Salutin is another (self-admitted) amateur historian who jumps across Mackenzie and doesn't understand him. There is nothing new in that — we all discovered the past for the first time as part of our education. Usually we were wrong about it. Perhaps only in Canada could a senior member have learned discoveries, and his ignorance is the national disgrace.

But Salutin's article is revealing. There's nothing so obvious about it as the author's resentment that Canada hasn't been the United States. But we haven't been as gory a history as the Americans, with the same roster of

continued on page 29

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Your View continued  
 honest and reliable. Surely this is the most naive conclusion — a conclusion that suggests we can't be proud of our history unless it turns out to have been an exotic and "exotic" and bloody as that of the United States (or China). This is a fraudulent nationalism — fraudulent because it seeks to twist rather than to understand the Canadian reality. Fraudulent because the author pretends as a Canadian nationalist while being willing to accept the very distinctions in our history that help make us Canadian. In rejecting our past as it was, in wanting to reject our past as it was, the characteristics of the American experience, Solovitz is in fact working to undermine our national identity. Most of all, Solovitz's nationalism is fraudulent because the first duty of a nationalist is to know something about his country, and Solovitz is profoundly ignorant.

Why Solovitz's article is featured in *Maclean's* baffles and depresses me. It is a terrible history. It is bad journalism, because even the novice journalist knows enough to interview people. The article does a great disservice to both the serious mature study of Canadian history and the attempt to create a lasting Canadian nationalism. I don't know how many other professional historians will complain to you about it. I had hoped for better, perhaps because I believed that *Maclean's* stood for professional journalism. With this article, at least, you have published drivel.

MICHAEL BLISS, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
 DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, UNIVERSITY  
 OF TORONTO

Rob Solovitz's *The Great Canadian History Robbery* (April) was, if one makes allowance for hyperbole, a refreshing newspaper. His praise for Stanley Ryerson's *Unusual Union* was right on. But he adds that "not one daily paper in the country reviewed it," and adds as a reason for this blackout "Ryerson is a Marxist, and his books are published by the press of the Communist Party of Canada."

Has-been. The book page of the *Ottawa Journal* led with an 800-word review of *Unusual Union* on June 8, 1985. It praised the book warmly. I know, because I wrote it. One can disagree with Ryerson's politics (as I do) and respect his scholarship and writing ability. In light of Solovitz's error, far all we know, perhaps other reviews will be published.

But I agree with him that Canadian history writing is now often a little rebirth of the old "colony to nation" thesis, that (quote) "The Far Trade In Canada and, with minor variations, Myer's 'History of the West'." What is wrong with that old thesis? I committed to him for the same reason: *Explorers Of North Amer-*

ica by J. B. Brecken, which complements the work of Isaac, and *Beautiful Dominion* by Glen Finkler, which disputes Donald Creighton's vision of the beneficent role of the British connection in Canadian history.  
 BILLIE O'LEARY, OTTAWA

Rob Solovitz seems blithely unaware of the awful burden that an "eventful" past carries with it and how deeply present generations in America and Europe have paid, are paying and will continue to pay for the "battles, crises and losses" which afflicted their forefathers. He looks with longing and envy to the traditional history of other nations that forget that our country owes no very real tribute to the people who found the "battles, crises and losses" in their former homelands left-destroying. Canadian history has witnessed no earthshaking revolutions or conflicts and nothing else could make the thoughtful critics more proud. Indeed, Canada would probably long since have ceased to exist if a civil war had ever broken out in our past.  
 JOHN WHEAT, KAMMACK, B.C.

Rob Solovitz — *The Great Canadian History Robbery* (April) — suggests that while history has not given us heroes, historians should. An odd opinion, even from one who admits to having discovered Canadian history in New York.

Mr. Solovitz might more profitably consider why we have refrained from worshipping individuals because out of our past. When the country is finally free, it will not be because, as Mr. Solovitz states, we've had better heroes but because our so-called nationalists have stopped believing the fact that we aren't like everyone else and started to understand our individuality.  
 DANIEL FRANKS, OTTAWA

## Renaissance women

Barbara From's article, *Great Women* (April), made more sense than most "liberation" polemics. One of the keys to being both your own person and a real woman is, as Alice Moore says, adjusting and coming to grips with the quality of self autonomy and dependency. Many young women like myself are bored with the dreams of militant women's lib, one reason being that a dream that dual characterizes all of the women interviewed in your article have achieved a great degree of independence, yet they have retained a strong sense of femininity. Their portraits were also presented with grace and dignity. The fact that most of these women began their careers at age 40 or there is a source of inspiration for those of us who think that we have to "become" by age 25. As Molly Bobak says, "Who

knows where your prime is?"

We need more articles of this quality in Canadian publications, directed at both men and women.  
 L. KENNEDY, TORONTO

Thank you for Barbara From's interview. It is interesting to hear what other Canadian women are accomplishing since we do not receive as much publicity as our sisters in the United States. It is curious about one point, why was it considered necessary to mention the number of children in each woman's family? Perhaps to convince people that these are really "normal" women? Or to assure the nervous traditionalists that women can fulfill the roles wife and mother as well as fulfill their own ambitions? It was not considered important to query Canada's provincial premiers — *The Politics Of Time* (February) — as to their marital status and the number of children in their families.  
 PATRICIA MAGNAN, LAKESIDE, QUE.

Barbara From has done more for women than a hundred bar-bares could achieve in a century!

Following Myra Kostko's *Women And Other Myths Of Liberation* (February), *Maclean's* has given women of all ages a lot to think about and, hopefully, courage to be themselves and not just what others expect them to be.  
 ANN KUTCH, EDMONTON

As I read Barbara From's article, *Great Women* (April), I began to wonder whether people still think that these women, and the social strata they represent, are the only ones leading worthwhile lives. The risk of the superficiality of that type. There would only survive because of the many other women and men who have spent their full and busy lives at a service level.

Every first class is a new breed, a bubbling spring that trickles along, joined by others until they make mighty rivers. Your Great Women are the waves and tugs floating on the surface, but the river is made up of the Women of Canada. Sing their praise sometimes.  
 A. KELLY ROTHWELL, WINDSOR, ONT.

## So big

I regret the slowness tone of both J. Two Wilson's article, *Seeking Today: What We'll Need Tomorrow* (March), and the accompanying editorial by Peter Newman. I find it difficult, after reading Wilson's article, to accept Newman's statement that Wilson "seems simply as a scientist, coolly reporting on the future of a subcontinent where he happens to live." Professor Wilson does not seem prone to prophesy and, more recently, college administration, but he is not recognized as one of the

continued on page 24

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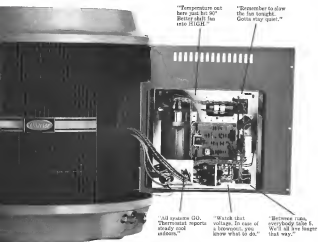
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## INSIDE MACLEAN'S

We put together this special issue because we see British Columbia as an absolutely characteristic part of Canada — definitely itself, but also very much a part of the rest of the land. It is one of several periodic examinations we hope to make of the various regions of the country.

The lead piece, on the seal of British Columbia (*The Pacific Pioneer*, page 27), was written by Alisa Galt, who presides over a highly successful radio phone-in program over Vancouver's CKLG-FM, and Bob Waller, who grew up in Mettride, BC, is a former assistant editor of *Maclean's* and now free-lances as a writer and photographer.

Alisa Fedorograham, in BC's most controversial — and most popular — journalist in his Vancouver *Sun* column, he has been documenting the rise of Dave Barrett, the subject of his profile (*A Stranger In The Land Of Plenty*, page 32), right back to the days when Barrett was a social worker and was fired by the Social Credit government. Since taking office last September, Barrett has rapidly established himself as Canada's most newsworthy provincial politician.

Phyllis Webb, who wrote the profile of Ben Mottish (*Preston In Paradise*, page 38), is a poet of perception and skill, whose most recent collection (*Selected Poems*) was published in 1971.

Robert Harlow (*Last Tango In Prince George*, page 40) is the head of the Creative Writing Department at the University of British Columbia and recently had his third novel, *Stone*, published by the Simon & Schuster in Vancouver.

George Rowntree, a West Coast poet (*The Art Of The Whistler*, page 45), is one of Canada's best-known writers and, by his own account, one of BC's most distinctive baseball players. He has published 18 books, including novels and collections of verse, and has written plays for television.

Roderick Haig-Brown (*Cassiopeia*, page 34) is a British-born naturalist whose 22 books have explored every aspect of the province's fish and wildlife. He is also a judge in the provincial court of BC at Campbell River.

George Woodcock (*Books*, page 96) has written 28 books, including *The Crystal Spire*, a biography of George Orwell, for which he won a Governor General's Award, and a study of Aldous Huxley.

Eric Ruckert (*BC History*, page 41) is a columnist for the Vancouver *Sun*.

Dale Zimoth (*Striving Into Tomorrow*, BC, page 82) is a 26-year-old poet whose work has appeared in *Some Warming*, *Mindscapes* and *Quarry*. His first book of poetry will be published this fall by Anansi.

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8-161, 8-162, 8-163, 8-164, 8-165, 8-166, 8-167, 8-168, 8-169, 8-170, 8-171, 8-172, 8-173, 8-174, 8-175, 8-176, 8-177, 8-178, 8-179, 8-180, 8-181, 8-182, 8-183, 8-184, 8-185, 8-186, 8-187, 8-188, 8-189, 8-190, 8-191, 8-192, 8-193, 8-194, 8-195, 8-196, 8-197, 8-198, 8-199, 8-200, 8-201, 8-202, 8-203, 8-204, 8-205, 8-206, 8-207, 8-208, 8-209, 8-210, 8-211, 8-212, 8-213, 8-214, 8-215, 8-216, 8-217, 8-218, 8-219, 8-220, 8-221, 8-222, 8-223, 8-224, 8-225, 8-226, 8-227, 8-228, 8-229, 8-230, 8-231, 8-232, 8-233, 8-234, 8-235, 8-236, 8-237, 8-238, 8-239, 8-240, 8-241, 8-242, 8-243, 8-244, 8-245, 8-246, 8-247, 8-248, 8-249, 8-250, 8-251, 8-252, 8-253, 8-254, 8-255, 8-256, 8-257, 8-258, 8-259, 8-260, 8-261, 8-262, 8-263, 8-264, 8-265, 8-266, 8-267, 8-268, 8-269, 8-270, 8-271, 8-272, 8-273, 8-274, 8-275, 8-276, 8-277, 8-278, 8-279, 8-280, 8-281, 8-282, 8-283, 8-284, 8-285, 8-286, 8-287, 8-288, 8-289, 8-290, 8-291, 8-292, 8-293, 8-294, 8-295, 8-296, 8-297, 8-298, 8-299, 8-300, 8-301, 8-302, 8-303, 8-304, 8-305, 8-306, 8-307, 8-308, 8-309, 8-310, 8-311, 8-312, 8-313, 8-314, 8-315, 8-316, 8-317, 8-318, 8-319, 8-320, 8-321, 8-322, 8-323, 8-324, 8-325, 8-326, 8-327, 8-328, 8-329, 8-330, 8-331, 8-332, 8-333, 8-334, 8-335, 8-336, 8-337, 8-338, 8-339, 8-340, 8-341, 8-342, 8-343, 8-344, 8-345, 8-346, 8-347, 8-348, 8-349, 8-350, 8-351, 8-352, 8-353, 8-354, 8-355, 8-356, 8-357, 8-358, 8-359, 8-360, 8-361, 8-362, 8-363, 8-364, 8-365, 8-366, 8-367, 8-368, 8-369, 8-370, 8-371, 8-372, 8-373, 8-374, 8-375, 8-376, 8-377, 8-378, 8-379, 8-380, 8-381, 8-382, 8-383, 8-384, 8-385, 8-386, 8-387, 8-388, 8-389, 8-390, 8-391, 8-392, 8-393, 8-394, 8-395, 8-396, 8-397, 8-398, 8-399, 8-400, 8-401, 8-402, 8-403, 8-404, 8-405, 8-406, 8-407, 8-408, 8-409, 8-410, 8-411, 8-412, 8-413, 8-414, 8-415, 8-416, 8-417, 8-418, 8-419, 8-420, 8-421, 8-422, 8-423, 8-424, 8-425, 8-426, 8-427, 8-428, 8-429, 8-430, 8-431, 8-432, 8-433, 8-434, 8-435, 8-436, 8-437, 8-438, 8-439, 8-440, 8-441, 8-442, 8-443, 8-444, 8-445, 8-446, 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8-733, 8-734, 8-735, 8-736, 8-737, 8-738, 8-739, 8-740, 8-741, 8-742, 8-743, 8-744, 8-745, 8-746, 8-747, 8-748, 8-749, 8-750, 8-751, 8-752, 8-753, 8-754, 8-755, 8-756, 8-757, 8-758, 8-759, 8-760, 8-761, 8-762, 8-763, 8-764, 8-765, 8-766, 8-767, 8-768, 8-769, 8-770, 8-771, 8-772, 8-773, 8-774, 8-775, 8-776, 8-777, 8-778, 8-779, 8-780, 8-781, 8-782, 8-783, 8-784, 8-785, 8-786, 8-787, 8-788, 8-789, 8-790, 8-791, 8-792, 8-793, 8-794, 8-795, 8-796, 8-797, 8-798, 8-799, 8-800, 8-801, 8-802, 8-803, 8-804, 8-805, 8-806, 8-807, 8-808, 8-809, 8-810, 8-811, 8-812, 8-813, 8-814, 8-815, 8-816, 8-817, 8-818, 8-819, 8-820, 8-821, 8-822, 8-823, 8-824, 8-825, 8-826, 8-827, 8-828, 8-829, 8-830, 8-831, 8-832, 8-833, 8-834, 8-835, 8-836, 8-837, 8-838, 8-839, 8-840, 8-841, 8-842, 8-843, 8-844, 8-845, 8-846, 8-847, 8-848, 8-849, 8-850, 8-851, 8-852, 8-853, 8-854, 8-855, 8-856, 8-857, 8-858, 8-859, 8-860, 8-861, 8-862, 8-863, 8-864, 8-865, 8-866, 8-867, 8-868, 8-869, 8-870, 8-871, 8-872, 8-873, 8-874, 8-875, 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9-162, 9-163, 9-164, 9-165, 9-166, 9-167, 9-168, 9-169, 9-170, 9-171, 9-172, 9-173, 9-174, 9-175, 9-176, 9-177, 9-178, 9-179, 9-180, 9-181, 9-182, 9-183, 9-184, 9-185, 9-186, 9-187, 9-188, 9-189, 9-190, 9-191, 9-192, 9-193, 9-194, 9-195, 9-196, 9-197, 9-198, 9-199, 9-200, 9-201, 9-202, 9-203, 9-204, 9-205, 9-206, 9-207, 9-208, 9-209, 9-210, 9-211, 9-212, 9-213, 9-214, 9-215, 9-216, 9-217, 9-218, 9-219, 9-220, 9-221, 9-222, 9-223, 9-224, 9-225, 9-226, 9-227, 9-228, 9-229, 9-230, 9-231, 9-232, 9-233, 9-234, 9-235, 9-236, 9-237, 9-238, 9-239, 9-240, 9-241, 9-242, 9-243, 9-244, 9-245, 9-246, 9-247, 9-248, 9-249, 9-250, 9-251, 9-252, 9-253, 9-254, 9-255, 9-256, 9-257, 9-258, 9-259, 9-260, 9-261, 9-262, 9-263, 9-264, 9-265, 9-266, 9-267, 9-268, 9-269, 9-270, 9-271, 9-272, 9-273, 9-274, 9-275, 9-276, 9-277, 9-278, 9-279, 9-280, 9-281, 9-282, 9-283, 9-284, 9-285, 9-286, 9-287, 9-288, 9-289, 9-290, 9-291, 9-292, 9-293, 9-294, 9-295, 9-296, 9-297, 9-298, 9-299, 9-300, 9-301, 9-302, 9-303, 9-304, 9-305, 9-306, 9-307, 9-308, 9-309, 9-310, 9-311, 9-312, 9-313, 9-314, 9-315, 9-316, 9-317, 9-318, 9-319, 9-320, 9-321, 9-322, 9-323, 9-324, 9-325, 9-326, 9-327, 9-328, 9-329, 9-330, 9-331, 9-332, 9-333, 9-334, 9-335, 9-336, 9-337, 9-338, 9-339, 9-340, 9-341, 9-342, 9-343, 9-344, 9-345, 9-346, 9-347, 9-348, 9-349, 9-350, 9-351, 9-352, 9-353, 9-354, 9-355, 9-356, 9-357, 9-358, 9-359, 9-360, 9-361, 9-362, 9-363, 9-364, 9-365, 9-366, 9-367, 9-368, 9-369, 9-370, 9-371, 9-372, 9-373, 9-374, 9-375, 9-376, 9-377, 9-378, 9-379, 9-380, 9-381, 9-382, 9-383, 9-384, 9-385, 9-386, 9-387, 9-388, 9-389, 9-390, 9-391, 9-392, 9-393, 9-394, 9-395, 9-396, 9-397, 9-398, 9-399, 9-400, 9-401, 9-402, 9-403, 9-404, 9-405, 9-406, 9-407, 9-408, 9-409, 9-410, 9-411, 9-412, 9-413, 9-414, 9-415, 9-416, 9-417, 9-418, 9-419, 9-420, 9-421, 9-422, 9-423, 9-424, 9-425, 9-426, 9-427, 9-428, 9-429, 9-430, 9-431, 9-432, 9-433, 9-434, 9-435, 9-436, 9-437, 9-438, 9-439, 9-440, 9-441, 9-442, 9-443, 9-444, 9-445, 9-446, 9-447, 9-448, 9-449, 9-450, 9-451, 9-452, 9-453, 9-454, 9-455, 9-456, 9-457, 9-458, 9-459, 9-460, 9-461, 9-462, 9-463, 9-464, 9-465, 9-466, 9-467, 9-468, 9-469, 9-470, 9-471, 9-472, 9-473, 9-474, 9-475, 9-476, 9-477, 9-478, 9-479, 9-480, 9-481, 9-482, 9-483, 9-484, 9-485, 9-486, 9-487, 9-488, 9-489, 9-490, 9-491, 9-492, 9-493, 9-494, 9-495, 9-496, 9-497, 9-498, 9-499, 9-500, 9-501, 9-502, 9-503, 9-504, 9-505, 9-506, 9-507, 9-508, 9-509, 9-510, 9-511, 9-512, 9-513, 9-514, 9-515, 9-516, 9-517, 9-518, 9-519, 9-520, 9-521, 9-522, 9-523, 9-524, 9-525, 9-526, 9-527, 9-528, 9-529, 9-530, 9-531, 9-532, 9-533, 9-534, 9-535, 9-536, 9-537, 9-538, 9-539, 9-540, 9-541, 9-542, 9-543, 9-544, 9-545, 9-546, 9-547, 9-548, 9-549, 9-550, 9-551, 9-552, 9-553, 9-554, 9-555, 9-556, 9-557, 9-558, 9-559, 9-560, 9-561, 9-562, 9-563, 9-564, 9-565, 9-566, 9-567, 9-568, 9-569, 9-570, 9-571, 9-572, 9-573, 9-574, 9-575, 9-576, 9-577, 9-578, 9-579, 9-580, 9-581, 9-582, 9-583, 9-584, 9-585, 9-586, 9-587, 9-588, 9-589, 9-590, 9-591, 9-592, 9-593, 9-594, 9-595, 9-596, 9-597, 9-598, 9-599, 9-600, 9-601, 9-602, 9-603, 9-604, 9-605, 9-606, 9-607, 9-608, 9-609, 9-610, 9-611, 9-612, 9-613, 9-614, 9-615, 9-616, 9-617, 9-618, 9-619, 9-620, 9-621, 9-622, 9-623, 9-62



in BC the Indians have managed to hold onto reserves near the whole population centres: in the Vancouver area, for example, there are almost 1,200 natives living on three reserves, a lot of which is prime development land.

Frontiers are only barely understood by those who occupy them, they are absolutely misunderstood by those who have never been there. Andria Leshowitz, now an English literature instructor at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, was in 1965 in Madison, Wisconsin, in 1965 when her husband returned to tell her that he had just been interviewed for a job in British Columbia.

"I don't want to move to Latin America," the man. The marriage has a kind of poetic logic: BC is the Latin America of Canada. A man forest, with my head back as the Sangre de Cristo in the mountains, and Ojopago the water drips in Lake Okauchip. Things grow tall and tropical, occasional of course, mostly the rainforest.

"When I found out where BC was I went to the University of Wisconsin library to find out something about the province," Andria remembers. "Well, that library had about a million books, but only one on BC, a pastoral coffee-table effort on Vancouver-by-the-sea, the magic land where there is no winter. Naturally, I decided that we would live in an old Victorian house. I nearly passed out when I saw Burnaby."

Burnaby is a suburb of Vancouver, and it is not in British Columbia at all, it is a cinder from eastern Canada, eastern architecture and sensibility, streets and parks, obedient to Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation assistance. Not because it is ugly, for British Columbia is an example of creating their own ugliness, but because it is foreign, a blight from Ontario, and it is creeping up the Fraser River, over prime farmland, encroaching the frontier.

But Burnaby demands a moral counterweight: Stanley Park, a tamed stretch of frontier in the centre of Vancouver. The developers have tried to build high-rise apartments on Stanley Park, too, but so far they have been broken back.

There are frontiers within the frontier: Paul St. Pierre, the former federal Member of Parliament for Coquitlam (a huge riding that includes some of the Cariboo mountain area) says that "Vancouver's main attributes, besides money, are the business potential and the fact that it didn't create. As far as I'm concerned, if you picked Vancouver up and played it in the middle of the Prairies, it would be just another city."

St. Pierre admires the Cariboo people. They're tough. "The ranchmen and prospectors there have devoted their lives to proving they can stay alive if everyone else disappears."

And he is wrong. It is wrong to say that the Cariboo people are the toughest. The difference between the lower mainland and the interior are sharp: smooth talk versus measured speech, fancy restaurants versus dusty cafés, dairy bars versus the beef pub, mild winters versus temperatures of 40 below and 100-far, profane versus genteel, noise versus quiet, conventional versus counter-culture.

There are the sort of differences that are made between any city in the world and the country that surrounds it. But in British Columbia the differences are deeper: the battle is needed and well defined. There's only one metropolis and that's Vancouver, squeezed onto the mouth of the Fraser River near the American border.

For the rest of Canada, British Columbia is the frontier. For the people who live in the lower mainland of British Columbia, the interior is the frontier. The cities of Vancouver are presently away from the frontier. They draw their energy, their spiritual nature from the wilderness. On vacation, the urban man will escape to the provincial parks. The man from the interior will go to Vancouver, to tour the department stores and shopping places. Both groups are satisfied.

Frontiers are useful, they make audacious people rich. It is possible to come to British Columbia, work in Vancouver, and with diligence become rich without ever being reminded that you are not in Toronto, Montreal, London or Tokyo. But there is also that dilemma, and in the wilderness it is impossible to



Gordon Starn

Former chairman, BC Hydro, now founding chair of the new chancellor of Simon Fraser University. "People out here would like to do studies first, but I decided just to move ahead."

Fred Shiff

President, Pulp and Paper Workers of Canada. "The Soviets were able to get away with 20 years of one-party rule. The BC Federation of Labor should be proud of themselves—they didn't do a damn thing."

become rich and at the same time to remember where you are.

Prince George is 500 miles from Vancouver, in the interior, a small city, but growing fast and proud of itself. It's 15 minutes from the centre of the city to virgin bush and forests fall about the downtown streets every Saturday noon because the pubs open at noon-thirty in the evening, and playday was the day before.

Ben Grant was born in Manitoba, but he is part of Prince George. He is worth \$36 million. His real estate and construction, then a construction company, and has lately expanded into other investments, including a pulp mill in Kitimat.

Grant is a working-class hero in British Columbia at one time he tried (unsuccessfully) to sell his beer at lower prices than most eastern Canadian brewers. He travels out of the province a lot now ("150 times to New York City last year") but won't go to Prince George as a home base.

"I like Prince better than anywhere else, and that's a hell of a thing for a Manitoba boy to say. It's only five minutes to work, the place is bustling but still feels homey, and I feel real comfortable with most of the people. It's my kind of town."

If an eastern businessman had said something like that about Toronto, it would sound silly. But

Grant is not an eastern businessman, or a Vancouver one. He doesn't have executive flunkies tripping over each other, when he makes a decision, he sees it through himself. And "I made my job without checking dough into the Social Credit chest (fate). I don't belong in any club because I don't have the time. I'm not much inclined toward that type of club. I have an Elsteyre beside my bed and if I have time in the morning I get up and go nowhere."

Grant also likes an occasional run at the cards. "I remember last fall a couple of hunting buddies decided to show me how to play the new game called Stock. After I'd won about \$1,000, they figured they'd showed me enough."

Any gambler would live at home in BC. Risk-taking is part of the frontier ethic. Ontario is blue chip, BC is penny stocks.

Financing industry is exactly that: primary. When you've cut down a tree, you know what you're out. A fisherman, feller or miner knows at the end of a day just what he's done.

The style of business in British Columbia is the same: primary commerce. Immediate gratification, immediate control. In 1967, Bennett set up a Bank of British Columbia because he believed the eastern banks weren't delivering the capital he thought BC needed to grow. Paul St. Pierre: "Canadian banking has always been dominated by central Canada, and it's constantly been looking at emigration, daring and every damn quality a national banking system should have. 'Never take a chance less you lose a penny' is the philosophy of the big banks. If you want to grow fast, you've got to take a few risks. The eastern banks don't dare enough."

The NDP opposition supported Bennett's bank, Premier Bennett. "But, we wanted a publicly owned bank, but the federal government killed any hope of that. We supported Bennett because the NDP has always supported a BC bank. Besides, banking has always been a tightly capitalistic club in this country — a tight eastern club. The decision was obvious."

The faculty cannot be ideology. BC first.

There are profound differences between the two major BC political parties, Social Credit and the NDP, but the differences are unique to BC: the political alternatives are not the same as the ones available in Ontario, or the Maritimes, or in Ontario. Since the Liberals, as eastern party, were effectively rejected in the early Fifties, the determining style of the party to power has been populist more than it has been socialist, populist more than socialist. Populist politics is a frontier politics. It has died where it was born, in the American West and almost 100 years ago, but populists are very much alive today in British Columbia.

The politics of the small town. British Columbians don't elect a party, they elect a mayor or a premier and his pals, a group they trust. Bennett's election, rumors smacked of the Women's Christian Temperance Union taking over the town.



**Tom Campbell**

*Former three-term mayor of Vancouver, known to the city and elsewhere as Tom Tercio. "The arena of political success is getting messy—with or against a minister."*



**Glenn Lewis**

*Writer, artist, pacifist. "Out how you get all the McDonald hamburger meals. Kinkadee is the spirit of the place, not the town. But there are people alive who can remember how lives in Kinkadee."*



**Andrea Lebowitz**

*English literature professor at Simon Fraser University, moved to BC from Madison, Wisconsin, in 1983. "There was only one book at the university library about BC—a picture book on a shelf with no writer."*



**W. A. C. Bennett**

*Leader of the Social Credit Party of British Columbia, premier of the province for 20 years. "BC is in a cash position better than any place on this continent."*

but in fact they were the crowning of BC's Pe Carwright. W. A. C. Bennett is a Christian man, publicly devout, honest, nobody in Kelowna ever complained about bad deals at his hardware store. Public-spirited, not fixed of power but aware of his calling.

A few Social Credit cabinet members thought of themselves as successors deprived, but Bennett was the true heir. He died in 1972.

Bennett may have known it. On the night of his death, he stressed the size of the inheritance he was passing on: "I will give every cooperation I can to the new premier and I will say again how pleased I am that the finances of this province are in such good shape. Nobody should worry in this province tonight or tomorrow on the stock market. They should not worry because the province is in wonderful financial shape. BC is in a cash position better than any place on this continent and so Mr. Barrett is going to have a great opportunity of doing things because he is going to have all the cash left by Premier Bennett."

Bennett was his own finance minister, and he kept a huge safe in his office suite to prove it. Last February, in his first budget, Barrett revealed that there was a net provincial debt of \$2.7 billion — just under \$1,250 for every person in the province. He replaced Bennett's safe with just of his collection of

signed Teflon glass, but retained the finance portfolio.

A large part of the debt came from the misadventures of BC Hydro, and particularly from the Columbia River Treaty of 1961. Barrett is trying to get that treaty renegotiated because it's "a bad deal for British Columbia." But, as he says, "The satisfaction or worry of it is that BC is wealthy enough to even absorb that kind of blow on its finances."

BC is rich. Its gross provincial product last year was estimated at about \$12 billion, up approximately 15% from the year before. The wealth comes from the resource extraction industries: forestry (MacMillan-Bloedel, Crown Zellerbach), mining (Cominco, Gobeil, Kama, Kama Resources), commercial fishing (BC Packers, Canadian Fishing Co.), and agriculture. A second source is foreign trade — the export of raw materials from BC and the Prairies, and the import of finished goods from the U.S., Japan and Europe.

The British Columbia government is rich, too, but from opposite, not production. In 1970, the BC government made about \$60 million on the sale of beer, wine and liquor, and only half that on the royalties from the sale of coal, petroleum and natural gas.

This is frontier capitalism at its coarsest: tax weakness, not strength. A few British Columbians, and many foreigners, have become rich selling or buying British Columbia, and the

traditional attitude of the government has been that this is virtuous. If exploration is good, free-wheeling capitalism is better. Bennett and his ministers believed that the land was there to be used by the mining, and that the mission of the government was to remove petty obstacles.

Ideas are obstacles, the effete idea of conserving the environment, for example. Political scientist Martin Rubin: "Rage of natural resources has become both the dominant part of the developmental psyche of British Columbia — namely, a tree is not a beautiful thing, a tree is not a poem, a tree is not green leaves, a tree is not beautiful and shelter and Glenn's fury tale. A tree is board feet, and not board feet to build a house but board feet to make money."

"There's a wilderness ethic that has led to the waste destruction of the forests here. Oh, you've always had a conservation lobby, but in terms of public policy and the people who have made decisions, the Junior Chamber of Commerce has basically run this province along with the Canadian Manufacturers' Association — BC chapter. And I think they've seen BC as a lush opportunity to make a buck."

The land is a gift to the strong, whoever the strong may be. Kootenay River, a strong American corporation, has a coal mine operation in the Elk River Valley of southeastern BC, on land that was first sold to the Canadian Pacific Railway in

1890. The land was then sold to an American company that became Crown New Industries and in 1968 Crown New Industries sold access to the coal on one sixth (10,000 acres) of this land to Kuster for \$26 million.

But the idea of the frontier demands action, something is happening on that land, good or bad, action is being taken, things are being done. A frontmanman clears the land, by reforestation. The district is not to do well, but to do. The coal goes to Japan. The pollution — the Kuster operation uses strip-mining techniques — stays with us. But at least we have the action.

The Nizmat Triangle is a virgin rain forest in southwest Vancouver Island. It is at present under tree-farm license. The forest products companies are willing to swap land with the provincial government for the Nizmat for something else. But there is little else. Most of the best stands of timber have been penciled out.

The aesthetics of ecology are not so much beside the point, but after the point the frontier must be made complete, and the lovers of beauty might as well resign themselves to it.

Arctic is prime, don't ask, about from the top. Results. Dr. Gordon Stevens, the former BC Hydro chairman, emigrated from Niagara Falls in 1912, and has been here ever since. One day in May, 1953, he was / continued on page 89

The Canadian political mosaic is complete. There has been a certain fascination in the past decade through six years as voters carved over the political landscape of Canada, province by province, to a new generation. There was the classical Canadian political mosaic — Harold of New Brunswick and Campbell of Prince Edward Island rooming together at Oshawa's Law School in Halifax, both sons of prominent politicians. Regis of Nova Scotia, married into a political family, another of Dalhousie's renowned products. The civil-service cool bluntness of Saskatchewan, Dalhousie and Oxford.

The wealthy, well-bred Loyalist of Alberta, with his aristocratic condenser Schreyer of Manitoba, the farm boy with four university degrees who doesn't like to be pictured smoking because it might offend his Italian constituents. Davis of Ontario, the milk-fed model of Middle Canada. Mooson of Newfoundland, the casual sons of a family doing farm, business of Quebec, the satiristic technocrat, polished at Harvard, Oxford and reputed as money.

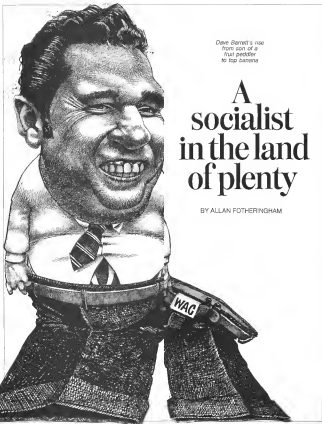
Then, on August 30, 1972, eccentric British Columbia became the last province to make the change and the one with the most startling choice — a happy free-enterprise socialist whose former years were spent immersed in the American free-enterprise genre. Dave Bennett, a few scholars by education, could not be further from the cloistered halls of Dalhousie and Oxford. Seattle University (Seattle) was his tutor. St. Louis University (St. Louis) left its mark. His conversation is sprinkled with references to Jefferson and FDR, not Lamer and King. It is indicative — and wonderfully British Columbia — that the new premier of the west, mid province, that serves the rest of Canada so conscientiously has never even been to Mexico!

Once Bennett's post is almost a mirror image of the American log-cabin political cliché. He's a Okanagan baby from the strongly socialist East End of Vancouver, the heart of the most reliably socialist province. The son of a fruit rancher, president, he makes cynical statements in his "ordinary" qualities. "My IQ is 90 on a hot day." As if in confirmation of the almost Hollywood quality in it all, he helped pay his way through college with a variety of jobs, including running Yu-Yo contests and working in the college cafeteria.

Both his brother and his sister are now American citizens. A nephew is a Vietnam veteran. One of his sons was born in the U.S. and has dual citizenship. Schooled in the practicality and informality of American Catholics, Bennett has an American casual approach that irritates conservative Canada. His wholesale dumping of pomp and ceremony in his first months in power ("I didn't come here to bullsh\*t," was his first week-end remark. Pierre Trudeau had it down to business) is as much a U.S. influence as it is the usual socialist dislike of trappings.

If not exactly from the stern or the ghetto, he is certainly the only one of the 10 Canadian premiers who is from the wrong side of the tracks. What is normal in American politics is unusual in Canada. Dave Bennett is unusual.

There is, first of all, the problem that he doesn't look like a 1970s premier. There are 205 pounds chomped on that foot-candle, 42-year-old freckle. Apearing — well, following — double chin comes out from beneath the lively dark eyes and wavy hair and frequent grin that in its most expressive width actually reveals the colossal smile of the man he resembles, W. A. C. Bennett. As he pulls about his office in his smoking coat, his trousers are belted beneath his paunch in fine, comfortable working-class fashion. (The Vancouver Sun's main fashion editor, pined at what he sees, has pleaded in print that the Premier for heaven's sake, should keep his suit jacket buttoned at formal occasions. BC's most famous belly will not be exposed. He then summarizing August night last year when Bennett demolished the 20-year reign of Social Credit and captured 38 of BC's 55 seats, his mother raised her face to the TV cameras and the world and uttered with some



Dave Bennett's nose from son of a fruit peddler to top banana

## A socialist in the land of plenty

BY ALLAN FOTHERINGHAM

small degree of satisfaction. "My little fat boy did it.") There is another disconcerting factor: the little fat boy comes on like Jonathan Wenden half the time. "What's your first motivation for going?" the reporters asked him. "The Russian hockey team." Footage? "There won't be a pork barrel in this government, only a corned beef barrel."

A Canadian politician with a sense of humor? Not the dry, sardonic snide of Trudeau, not the heavy telegraphed jokes of Derbattister, but a steady stream, all day long, of comments, puns, apical references and satire — all delivered with the timing of Rip Williams and the charm of representative George Burns. He's the common man's Eugene Forsey.

The image of the wisecracking fat boy doing to Bennett right up until that August upon when he became BC's first socialist premier. "People are consciously underestimating me," he complains, leaning back in his chair and waving to the government photographers pouring down at him from a quadriga window 30 feet away into his removed office where the drapes are now always kept open. ("When I walked in here after Bennett left I expected to see the Warden of Oz being locked a street, breaking smoke and flames. That's the way he operated.")

The underman nation goes back in his high school days, when the little lumpy fat boy earned the nickname Fluke for inexplicable successes.

"It's weird, it's really strange," says a lifelong friend, schoolteacher Joe Warnock. "Dave always had this tremendous luck — is righty, lefty, dumb, poet — anything finally it came to the conclusion that it was in fact. He just had a sort of uncanny way of doing things. It looked awkward. He'd kick a ball and we'd watch and say, 'You can't do it like that.' And he'd score."

There are those in the Social Credit media, still stung at having their comfortable in party position knocked down to a miserable opposition of only 10 MLAs, who claim the old Fluke qualities have returned, that Bennett somehow has roared into the left vulnerability of an unsuspecting electorate grown accustomed to 20 years of socialist failures in the polls.

The thought — now thick about dust — of British Columbia voluntarily plunging into socialism is almost too incredible to contemplate. This is not, the best in mind, a socialist down at the end of a Deseronto. This is a cultured, lively British Columbia — the richest province in the nation after Ontario and the province in which the crucial quality-of-life question is probably higher than in any other province in Canada.

It is certainly the first Canadian "There" premier to choose socialism, and it may be the first affluent electorate in the world voluntarily to give a landslide Trudeau in a socialist game. When you stop to think about it, the whole thing is as well, fluke.

The point is that the fat little boy, as always, in his awkward, lumpy manner, knew what he was doing. When an NDP victory in fact appeared possible in 1968, when Wally Bennett's long-practiced arrogance as last second gave a little too arrogant, the NDP leader was a clever, ambitious but rather cold Vancouver lawyer, Tom Berger, who now sits as a member of the BC Supreme Court. He engineered BC's voters, as the little influence of Stephen Lewis (engineered Ontario voters in 1971). When the NDP went down to a humiliating defeat in 1969 with Berger losing his own seat, the sophomore boy was already a near-year veteran of the legislature, a near-year expert in observing the considerable skills of W. A. C. Bennett.

In 1972 the little fat boy, by now the leader, engineered no out. In a shrewdly conceived campaign, he ordered all NDP candidates and campaign workers to refrain from making optimistic predictions, to refuse to discuss any reported "winning games."

Bennett raised the province, standing sideways to his enemies, opening his jacket and explaining that his magnificent belly was a product of the province. — *Continued on page 37*



# Coastscape

BY RODERICK HAIG-BROWN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HORST EHRECHT

*People and the land in a state of grace*

All people are regionalists, even in this day of swift through seldom any travel gives an island as small as Britain has its northern, southern and midland, to say nothing of Welsh, Highland Scot and Lowland Scot. Londoner, Mancunian, Glaswegian, Prince has Breton and Basque, Puritan, Alsatian and all the others. Hereditary groupings, armed through coarctate gratitudes? I think not. I know sophisticated New Yorkers who travel frequently to Europe but even today consider the great place an infinite wilderness and the Rocky Mountains insurmountable. I know eastern Canadians who think the country stops at the head of the lakes, and westerners who would rather never go east. I am not sure, though, that this makes either party less Canadian.

My own first experience of Canada was a summer afternoon in Vancouver, followed by an overnight stewardship journey through the Inside Passage to a logging camp well beyond the reach of roads or public railroads. Since I had come from the state of Washington, the Pacific Coast woods were not new to me, there was less Douglas fir, more hemlock and true fir, much more cedar, no vine maple. My companions were preponderantly Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian, Italian, even as they had been in Washington, but with this difference: most were first generation immigrants, even as I was, and many of the emigrants



and dorky punchers in those days of  
straw were Scottish or English.

In spite of the general sentiment, the  
country seemed to me wilder, freer,  
more remote and more exciting. It was  
river and forest and mountains on the  
ground level, full of secret possibilities —  
hidden lakes and conceals narrow val-  
leys with steep-walled canyons, shad-  
died wildlife except in the deep forest,  
infinite salmon runs trout in every  
lake and stream. But what was known  
about it all seemed little more than rum-  
ours and old wives' tales.

I had my preconceptions of Canada  
and Canadians. It is difficult to remem-  
ber now precisely what they were, con-  
sidered of childhood impressions in  
England during World War I, the writ-  
ings of Charles Roberts and Ernest  
Thompson Seton, the talk of one's el-  
ders and occasional accounts of school  
friends who were Canadian or had Ca-  
nadian connections. A Canadian was a  
tall, lean man, quasi-spoken, keen-eyed,  
totally dependable in any man or tough  
understanding. He was hardy and adap-  
table, having acquired many of the char-  
acteristics of the woods Indians, the  
plain Indians and the Arctic explorers.  
Canada was a land of forests and  
wheatfields and outdoors. Canadian  
woods were the woods of Northern On-  
tario, Canadian loggers were river driv-  
ers, Canadian fishermen were daymen  
on the Grand Banks, Canadian wood-  
men were the best in the world.

Those ideas called for some revision,  
though not quite along the lines one  
might have expected. All Canadians  
were not tall, nor were they calm and  
home, many were small and reliable,  
most were hard, driving workers  
through the day and loved to talk in the  
backhouses at night, to be easy — quick  
and sure on one's feet — was a virtue far  
beyond mere strength. To use brains  
and ingenuity in the moving of bulk and  
weight — huge logs, whole trees, dorky  
engines on sleds, crippled locomotives —  
was the sapient virtue. Few of my com-  
panions were woodmen, though there  
few were highly skilled. Most consid-  
ered anything beyond the edge of the  
logging slash dangerous and mysterious  
territory, neither bird nor personal in-  
terested them much. Few were hunters,  
even fewer fishermen. But they were  
kindly and tolerant beyond most men I  
had known, quickly making a place for  
the stranger and his peculiarities, always  
sane and companionable friends in time  
of need.

We worked long hours and long  
weeks, so my Canada took time to ex-  
pand, but it did so. There was the talk of  
other Canadians, city newspapers in the  
mid, three or four days old, occasional  
copies of *Maclean's* and the *Montly Her-  
ald* and *Sun Weekly* which gave a firm  
body to the country, earthy and relaxed.  
Ottawa was fun. / continued on page 38

# Protest in paradise

BY PHYLLIS WEBB

*in a province of individuals Vancouver's Ben Metcalfe is a little more individual than most*

If your memory goes as far back as September and October of 1971, you might remember that an 80-foot hullbot pucker named the *Phyllis Cormack*, renamed *Greenspacer*, sailed off with a motley crew for the Alaskan island of Adak to protest an American two-engine underground nuclear explosion. My name was on the waiting list to join the crew. There were about 50 ahead of me, but I was in my mindless phase and hoped. The boat left without me, but the real disappointment came when it turned around. Three *Greenspacer* Two set out, too late to make it for the boat—it left without me also. I became a spectator, convinced the whole thing was an elaborate conspiracy. Fast back and waited for the third. It came. I felt it in my spine. The boat didn't even twitch, but the earth shuddered. I was glad those too small ships of fools, male characters or not, had done what they could do, which wasn't much, but it was symbolic and beautiful and it was outrageous.

Less than a year later, last June, a third *Greenspacer* set off from New Zealand, headed for the site of a French nuclear test in the atmosphere near the South Pacific atoll of Mururoa. On June 25 an international report announced that the first of seven scheduled nuclear doves had gone off. *Greenspacer* III, a 35-foot ketch, was out there somewhere with three vulnerable kamias being aboard, testing their own device. The news that the world's own super said "they" can't get it is jeopardy.

I was still in Vancouver. Listening to the radio, watching TV. The French government wouldn't talk, but Ben Metcalfe, propaganda minister for *Greenspacer* protest missions, would. So *Greenspacer* was getting the news.

Every time you turned on the radio or TV a bearded Metcalfe was making another statement. I ought to have been enough, but I wanted to know more. My curiosity was piqued by the man behind the *Greenspacer* mask. At the age of 32, with a kind of — or two — of dedicated people, he had stage-managed a remarkably successful people's protest, first in New Zealand and Australia, on the downing of the *Arcturion*, then around the world. He'd sailed 2,100 miles in 14 days on *Greenspacer* III, jumped ship at Rarotonga and continued his journey through Peru, Mexico and the South Pacific islands.

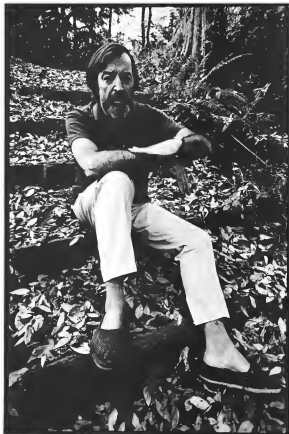
He'd been arrested in Peru and deported from France, leaving behind him a guerrilla group that made instant collaboration of formidable Parisians with a black pan-ther battalion, reading *WOLFGANG KROGER* now. He'd met the Pope, who blessed the *Greenspacer* flag, and gone on to agitate at the first United Nations Conference on the Human Environment—all in time to be back home near the telephone during the test scheduled for June and July.

But I'd seen Metcalfe, or rather more often heard him, worse often than before. I knew enough about him to suspect a deacon, but not enough to be sure. I've been a radio fan of his for years, treasuring his wit and wisdom (he might call it what and wisdom), heard the scratchy, compelling voice. Occasionally we appeared on the same radio program together. *Cries On Air*. I was intrigued by the incomprehensibility of his outings and specific cynicism. What was it, I wondered, that had turned Ben Metcalfe, drama critic, admirably growing increasingly social in his correspondence these last few years, into what is perhaps the white whale?

So when I was, one warm early rainy morning last June, knocking at the door of Metcalfe's pretty garreted home in West Vancouver, I arrived at once and got Dorothy and Ben out of bed. Their phone had been ringing all night, calls coming in from Auckland, Sydney, Toronto, Paris, London, New York. The *Greenspacer* protest was arousing interest around the world, though Canadian papers were giving it only minimal coverage.

Despite the sleepless night, Metcalfe was looking well and greeted me warmly. We got coffee and went to his den to talk. A handmade sign near the door told me that I was entering THE ECO'S NEST.

While I was setting up my tape recorder, Ben announced with a gesture of self-mocking theatricality, "I'm the leader of the Suburban Guerrillas." Here we were in an attractive apartment-house-beside-the-sea, complete with swimming pool. But if the leader of the Suburban Guerrillas could chuckle over his coffee at his own expense on that particular morning, I knew his balance was sure. (Continued on page 33)



# Last tango in Prince George

BY ROBERT HARLOW

*Ethos drawn from the landscape, the emotional geography of British Columbia*

Even looking at an ordinary school-atlas rendition of Canada, one might suspect British Columbia of being different, distinctive, peculiar. In relief it doesn't look blessed, and one imagines it tough going in any direction. The land is heaved up, and one heave is hardly separated from another. The place is essentially intransigent all the way from its eastern border to the Pacific Ocean whether you travel across it from Fort McMurray, Red Deer or Jasper, or here (because that's about all you can do) west from Fort St. John or Fort Nelson in the north. Other than that, the lakes tell the tale of the landscape. Kootenay, Arrow, Okanagan, Quesnel, Fraser, Stuart, Skeena, Bulkley, they dominate the long narrow valleys between the ranges. Mapped, the coastline looks as if God had begun to recycle it and had stopped. In Columbia-Vancouver, the Queen Charlotte and hundreds inlets—six paces ripped off and set aside.

Half the people of BC live in that tough going. They are a particular people who are distinguished spiritually and geographically from those living in the southwest of the province, and they are still dominated by a landscape that only very recently has begun to succumb and yield to that peculiar logic of our modern world which clearly keeps it with technology when sense and creativity will not generate profits fast enough. The landscape is partly in blame: a challenge with its obstinacy and its promise in a way the Primitives don't and Upper and Lower Canada haven't for a century or more. And the people of BC who have lived up-country or on the islands and around the mines have sometimes had quick alternating motives: self-preservation, escape, cupidity, love and, finally, wanting to have this rich cake and eat it too. Still, for me, these people have been their own kind of heroes bringing the final west to frontier—people who have had, as heroes should, a passion for anonymity and a talent for being ignored. While all the glory goes to those who live in the lower left-hand corner of the map.

The usual rectangle of BC is perhaps the most superb anomaly in the province. As you drive down from the interior it simply appears, an extended line that begins west of the town of Hope and runs between mountains on the north and the Columbia border on the south until it finally becomes the delta of the Fraser River—increasingly attended by another anomaly called Greater Vancouver. Into that rectangle is crowded the other half of the people of BC, who live by selling the chains and the resources of its hinterland. That lower val-

ley of the Fraser is protected by sun and mountains from Canada's chief and best-known peril: its weather. It is outdoors. The old Persian word *paradise*, from which we get our word *paradise*, means an enclosed area, a royal enclosure in fact. Hebrew Scripture uses the word to mean the walled in Garden of Eden. My encyclopedia tells me we should understand paradise to mean "a place of rest and refreshment in which the righteous dead enjoy the glorious presence of God."

When I was young and being brought up in Prince George (population 2,000 then) I don't think I ever heard Vancouver called anything but The Coast. We did not refuse to say Vancouver's name out of awe—as the orthodox still will not speak the name of the Devil—but because, I think, we felt there was something epicure about the place. Addressing friends here in the north, I have heard people who believe the will Connections between the lower mainland (which should somehow be thought of as including our capital city Victoria) and the rest of the province have always been gracious. From a mining or pulp camp, for instance, the lines of communication go back to New York or London or Tokyo and then to Greater Vancouver. For lumber towns it is best to go through Chicago or even Cedar Rapids, Iowa, or other unlikely places in order to make a solid and meaningful connection that will actually attract the attention of a notable mogul at The Coast. Coal? Per access call Kaiser in San Francisco. To ask who happened to the Columbia River, don't phone Vancouver, get hold of Washington, DC, although they may not answer because they're still laughing too hard. The Coast doesn't communicate northwest very much, but it talks a lot: it also doesn't invest its money in the rest of BC. It would be hard to trace postage to bring out a ton of diamonds when most came from Boise or Elmer or even Lague that someone from the real world was lending a hand with Switzerland. There, as the scene goes by we get what pieces we can of it—and do very rarely, thank you, so don't knock it. Meanwhile, up-country, the people who have to live with that Byzantine setup may be forgiven if they try to bypass the whole thing.

Not long ago I was at a party, and in the context of a social conversation "growing up in the north" was mentioned and a man from midwest America asked me what, for guy's sake, people did in my hometown the best part of a couple of generations ago. (It is odd how people from Madison, Wisconsin, or Tyler, Texas, and Greater Vancouver—

## BC HILIFE

A PORTFOLIO OF INDIGENOUS LIFESTYLES PHOTOS BY MICHAEL FOSTER, TEXT BY EVE HOCKETT

Some lives are detachable. Some people have nothing to do with the place they live in. They could stay, and be true to themselves, in Vancouver or Halifax or Detroit or Ecuador.

Not so J. V. Clyne. Not to the rest of the people on these six pages. They are where they live, and they could be nowhere else but in British Columbia.

J. V. Clyne is retiring chairman of the board of MacMillan Bloedel Limited, the largest, most influential company in BC. In 1972, MacMillan Bloedel's sales were \$942 million, mostly from the forests of BC and the processing of their resources.

Now, there is nothing wrong with that. That is capital, and that is good. Clyne, a retired industrialist with unorthodox interests, says, "Capitalism revolves around profit—an ugly word, but if you do away with the profit motive you are acting in a manner totally contrary to the human instinct. There is strength in capitalism. Money in itself doesn't bring happiness, but often the pursuit of money does."

Witty, sophisticated, brilliantly read, Clyne por-

trays himself as a tireless keeper of the capitalist flame.

"We're not working as we used to. More people are being supported by the state. Look at the breakdown of moral fibre. Decadence—in the way our society is beginning to look with tolerance on the use of drugs—... even talking about legalizing marijuana."

"When we see 40,000 people watching the Super Bowl, isn't that a sign of decadence? People watching other people playing. We've stopped doing and started watching."

Clyne worked as a cowboy on a ranch near Tullahoma, became a lawyer, chairman of the Maritime Commission of Canada, then a judge of the BC Supreme Court before joining MacMillan Bloedel at 35. His advice: "Do what you have to do—with everything you've got. You don't have to win each round, but if you've played hard—even if it's just a game of bridge or tennis—if you haven't been casual, haven't fooled around, you will have gone far in the pursuit of happiness. Which is the ultimate reason for living, isn't it?"



Half of the people who live in BC live in the Vancouver area.

The other half are scattered around, on Vancouver Island, up the coast, and in the interior. There is occasional commensuration, but of the kind common between two countries. The gap is wide, and you cannot get over. Unless you are somebody like Chunky Woodward.

In 1882, Chunky Woodward's grandfather built a department store in downtown Vancouver. When Chunky took over 16 years ago, Woodward's had become a \$96.5 million seven-store retail empire. Today Woodward's is a complex in excess of \$360 million with 15 stores in BC and Alberta.

But there is another part of the Woodward empire, and another suburban to Chunky Woodward's life, and that comes around the Woodward Ranch at Douglas Lake, bequeathed to him by his other grandfather. Half a million acres, 10,000 head of cattle, one of the biggest ranches in North America.

When Woodward came home from World War II, he knew in his heart that he was destined for the world of commerce. But he took a three-month sabbatical to work on the ranch. "The three months passed, and I figured as long as I didn't hear from my father I could stay there and be a cowboy. Then one day, I got a phone call asking if I was going to be a

## Chunky Woodward

cowboy all my life or was I going to work for the company. The last male Woodward left I had a duty. I came down to work."

The images are important. The last male Woodward. Duty. To go down into Vancouver, away from the country of the heart.

Now there are other male Woodwards, and the duty is less defined, it would be possible to be content with \$360 million, to stay at Douglas Lake. It would almost be easier if the \$360 million were to vanish, for Woodward to become a poor man. "I wouldn't live in the city. I'd go and live in the country. I could live in a cabin, quite happily — live off the land. In the country, you can certainly get enough to feed yourself. You know, I think I could handle it."

But there is the money, there is the power, the duty. And so when it is necessary to commute between lives one does it in a seven-passenger twin-engine the Hawland 125.

And to do it well. In 1964, Woodward rode for Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip at the Royal Windsor Horse Show. He rode superbly. When he was asked to perform for them again he refused. He did not consider he could surpass the original performance. He had done his duty, and done it well.



This is Phil Mitty, the first Emperor of Passage Island.

Eight years ago, Mitty owned a prosperous but not especially remarkable real estate empire. A client asked him to unload 32-acre Passage Island, a mile and a half from West Vancouver. He failed. Eight years ago, nobody understood that islands, especially well-treed and unspoiled islands, were treasures from the 20th century.

Phil Mitty understood. He bought Passage Island himself, for \$60,000.

Passage Island is now worth, at the very least, a million dollars.

Mitty knew that the way to beat the frontier was to package it and preserve it, if the pioneers had become rich by exploiting the land, he would become rich by saving it, by returning it to its original form. It was a graceful way to make money.

Mitty subdivided Passage Island into 60 lots, on the island's own terms, each lot is defined by natural boundaries. He appraises, and will continue to appraise, all architectural designs, all planning, all electricity, all fencing, boats and boats. He decides who is to be permitted to buy a lot. One fellow admired the trees, and then said that they would make a nice log cabin. He was not permitted to buy a lot. He had missed the point. He did not understand that

## Phil Mitty

in a sanctuary — especially in a sanctuary — is not verbiage.

Each people are not necessarily people of power. Dolts have made a million dollars before, and will again. But only a genius can make sociology gather a million dollars for him. Phil Mitty became rich because he understood the sanctuaries of the frontier, that pioneers enjoy the process of having things come money, the process of liquidating territory. But then they feel ashamed of the result and want to be apart from it, so they pretend it does not exist. He also understood that pioneers like to do all this within easy commuting distance of their crowded, downtown office.

"I am emperor of the island," says Mitty. And he is emperor of the island. He, and he alone, can give permission to cut a tree. He, and he alone, can give approval to cut a house. He knows that when you create a counter-frontier, you must control it. He has built his own home there.

Phil Mitty is one of the first of the new rich. Those who make their money by maximizing their purity. He is an honorable man, and he sleeps very well at night. He represents the passing of the robber barons. He is the first divorcee, and good luck to him and his island.





When Vancouver was part of the mechanical culture, Tom Campbell was its mayor; he presided over the city like a cowboy riding a great roaring mechanical rearing horse. But then Vancouver, like all cities, entered the electronic culture, and the thrasher became a computer. Cowboys do not ride computers. The new mayor of Vancouver is Art Phillips.

## Art Phillips

Phillips is a former investment counselor and perfectly in tune with the computer. He was elected mayor, following four years as an alderman, because he was a decent, gentle, well-spoken man (television cool, McLuhan would say, against Campbell's radio hot), everybody liked that. When he won, he began to remove an inscribed civil servant or two; most people liked that, except their friends, who called him a cruel and heartless landlubber. "What am I really?" he said. "I guess I'm a gentle, easy-going landlubber."

Phillips knows that the trouble with Vancouver is that it runs against the grain of the province; it is dream, and provides little acres to breathe. He wants a downtown core with wide open spaces. The Campbell administration approved downtown development that would make Vancouver even more solid and unbreathed. Phillips would like to make those developments irrelevant, by providing psychic open

space, through management of the city's \$60 million worth of random wastelands into non-plaza for people to live and work, by developing light rapid-transit lines so that people who can't stand to be surrounded by the city still the love can get out of it — fast.

Phillips was one of the founders of The Election Action Movement, a political group that took power away from the New-Partisan Association. The words in those titles are important. *New-Partisan* was old-fashioned style: forget the ideas, just make the money. The new partisans understood that electoral politics demands *action* and *Movement*: spread the money to serve the ideas.

At the same time, Phillips understands that it is more important to have ideas than to boast about having ideas. "How can I go off on some ideological tangent? Every time I get intellectual, the phone rings and somebody tells me what I'm going to do about the dog dying up their house."

If Vancouver is the *utopia* in *Paradise*, Art Phillips is its *progressive*. His job is to tell the city what it is to become, to define its action and movement. On the frontier, to define the action is to define everything, and Art Phillips knows what and where the action is. (See also page 12.)



## Certain citizens of the frontier

are assumed to be inferior, because they are considered to be unable or unwilling to participate in the work of clearing the land. That is the job of the white male pioneer. Women, blacks, Indians and the rest may be interesting, but not significant — not serious in the pioneer culture. (Of course, these extremely people *did* clear the land, but they did not control it, strength have no power.)

This tradition is composed of unadmitted and destructive narrow-mindedness, but it is still rampant in BC. These are signs, however, of a new frontier developing within the old one, as women and blacks and Indians and Orientals demand their proper places in the life of the province.

In the last provincial election, Rosemary Brown won a seat as MLA for the riding of Vancouver-Burrard. She had previously been ombudswoman for the Status of Women Council in Vancouver. She is on the leading edge of the new frontier. "I came to Canada from Jamaica when I was 19, and for the first time I heard people saying, 'You're inferior because you're black.' But it was too late. Where I'd come from, the governor was black, the judges were black, the police were black, anyone who was anyone was black. Your self-image is not very early, and I know I wasn't inferior and there was no way anyone could

## Rosemary Brown

convince me that I was."

To be a black woman is to be doubly dismissed, but nobody is a victim if they refuse to be made one. "We've inherited so much from the struggle and suffering of other women who fought to make the world better for us. We can't sit back and pull our squandly dresses around our knees and say 'It's too dirty out there for a nice lady like me.' We just can't."

Mrs. Brown's style is serious and low-key, she prefers to give opponents the benefit of any reasoning doubt. "They don't mean any harm, they just don't think. We keep telling them black, black, black. It works. I mean, how many times have you heard the phrase 'agony in the woodpile' in the last 10 years?"

But she does not repudiate the tactics of the tougher women's liberation groups. "They bring people's attention to what's wrong, and then the quieter groups go in and do the mopping-up operation. The reality is that police women's groups who write letters and protest petitions have always existed. But nothing ever changed. The new focus came as a direct result of the kind of things these young girls did."

The new frontier is realises that you have a place, and to take it. It is the same as the old frontier, but more just, more complete, and more human.



The pioneers claimed the land, cleared it, and built homes on it. That's what you do on the frontier. That's what frontiers are for.

These people live on the Maplewood Muddflats in North Vancouver. That's just over there on Burrard Inlet, about a mile east of the Second Narrows Bridge. They're in the suburbs. They claimed the land and built homes on it.

The only problem was that somebody else owns the land already. That of course is irrelevant as far as the Muddflats are concerned. Ownership is an abstraction, the land wasn't being used. A pioneer takes a vacant. Unused land is useful.

It should be made clear that this is not a case merely of one or two trivial cases coming out on somebody else's property, but is a social movement. At one time there were 30 houses on the Maplewood Muddflats, a community homestead.

But there are complications in the life of the pioneer on the developed frontier. One of them is government. North Vancouver district council refused to concede the social potential of urban pioneering and ordered the landowners to destroy the Muddflats' homes. When this picture was taken, there were only six houses remaining on the Maplewood Muddflats. Soon there may not be any.

## Fusion People

The squatters (a bureaucrat's way of referring to pioneers) declined to move and the owners took court action. The case was settled out of court: the squatters agreed to leave Maplewood Muddflats by March 38 and the owners agreed to pay them \$500 if they got rid of a quantity of garbage and vacated the "structures" by that time.

But one social analyst thinks there was something else at stake: "Look, Vancouver is an urban squatter in a frontier society. Vancouverites feel guilty. The pioneers on the Maplewood Muddflats actually confront the urban people and the bureaucrats with a true frontier lifestyle, and that emphasizes the alienation of the urban culture. The people on the Muddflats represent a true fusion of styles, a frontier adaptation to an urban reality. Everybody else in Vancouver represents the opposite: an urban adaptation to a frontier reality. It's only natural."

The frontier is an interface, between man and nature — between man and God, if you like, for British Columbia has always been God's Country. The people on this page, and on the preceding five pages, live on (just) squatters, and are shaped by it. They could live nowhere else.

And, of course, British Columbia could live nowhere else, in Canada, and next. Our frontier. ■

# The art of the webfoot

BY GEORGE BOWERING

Baseball, poetry and other cultures

There is a poet in Vancouver who calls himself Canada's National Magazine and carries a pet slug with him when he goes to parties or across the glowing voids for poetry readings. Yet he is one of Canada's most serious artists and was once called the best poet in the nation by a man who was speaking out of my motel TV screen on the CBC program *Verses*.

There is another poet out here who once declared himself mayor of Vancouver, providing Marlowe to run a full page picture of him, and that's back when the paper were bigger. Since that time he has worked at the city morgue, got himself elected to UBC's senate and appeared on CTV's *Myname*, billed in TV Guide as a "Hollywood agent."

A third, years later, pulled himself up off the floor and looked a four-foot-tall, one-eyed woman's life (upward and not down) on the seat of the storm during a basketball game. Then he apologized at half time and later joined the women's team, only, for his trouble, to have his thumb dislocated by a teammate's snappy pass.

The poetry scene in Vancouver has changed over the past 10 years, and if the past record holds, those changes will be felt in the eastern portion of the country in short order. There's even this — at least since the beginning of the Sixties.

The Sixties was the decade of what Raymond Souster, the Toronto poet, called "New Wave Canada." The wave started in the Pacific and washed eastward over the country, effecting a great change in the outlook and quality of Canadian verse.

The anthology of the decade began to be filled more and more with the work of young poets from Vancouver, which generally meant young poets from the hillside towns of BC and for the first time the publishing houses in Toronto descended back by West Coast writers such as John Newlove, Bill Burt, Laurel Kearns, Daphne Marlatt and Frank Devry. At the end of the Sixties there were about 50 Vancouver poets whose work was known to readers in Ontario and perhaps 100 more who were known to the local scene here.

The original assumption these poets held was that poetry was a vocal art not a rhetorical one, and certainly not a pre-animated one. At first this assumption was attacked and scolded at by the poets and critics in Toronto and Montreal, but soon the most important younger poets in the east were seen to be making the wave. Victor Coleman, Margaret Atwood, by now, David McFadden all sounded as though they had never heard of Gutenberg and his censors at McGill University.

But that was the Sixties. In those days the Vancouver poets used to speak of their community and they meant largely a community of artists, writers, painters and candlestick makers who collaborated on their works and latched their backs upon the upward striving individualism of the Toronto culture scene, where the publishers and galleries were. Now the community has settled comfortably in what the Toronto magazine might call the waste-lands, not dashed by art at all but accepting no grace in everything they do.

There is to say, the artists, writers, poets, dancers now see themselves as a nation here. It is called the Pacific Nation at times, or the Kootenai League, or the New Era Social Club.

The New Era Social Club proper, if that's the word, is a group of collection of rooms over some hospital where on East Powell Street, in the grimy heart of what used to be called Japan. It's a centre, one of many, for cooperative work on the arts, floor space for inventing, rhyming, or just plain social ribbing. Like, for instance, the weekly Hot Stone League sessions where poets and painters talk about their activities over hot tea and warm wine. The New Era Social Club is mainly disorganized by Flakely Ranching, Taki Blues Singer and the poet calling himself Canada's National Magazine, Flakely Ranching is the son de jazz of Glenn Lewis the poet, Canada's National Magazine is Corry Gilbert and nobody seems to know the original name of Mr. Blues Singer, a long-haired photographer from the head of the rising sun.

There are some of the Kootenai poets currently in vogue in Vancouver artistic circles. There are at least six poetical schools of thought about them. They may be attempts to add glamorous mystification to us as we used to see in the successful rock scene these people enjoy, or they may be another conscious attempt to get away from the career game played by artists who sign their names big on their works. Maybe it is some kind of bizarre combination of these motivations. But it should be noted that Vancouver's art scene is dominated now by cooperative and collective organizations, all with fairly (unpredictable) names — the aforementioned NESG, Ignominious, Chicken Rock, Image Rock, Bush Rock, The York Street Pentagon and the East End Parks, to name a few.

While these organizations people with a social perspective forget about the future and work at teaching each other and immigrants from the hills how to use cameras, painting poems, video machines, politics, etc. (continued on page 38)





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**LAST TANGO** (page 40) and Toronto too, assure that supply lines within the purview of the U.S.A. allow them, by some magic, to be piped in to the glories of Washington, New York and Las Vegas, but to have to live in Kaula Bager or Kaula Bager would force them vulnerability out of touch with Uncle Sam's ergonomic zones.) The answer, which the sense of the party drowned out, was that my people died.

There is much in this British Columbian, by and large, did not go to the underworld because they were driven by hunger or politics. They were not Montreal, Toronto, Bakers or Winnipeg Ukrainians. Not were they those Englishmen who climbed things because they were there. They came for any number of reasons, but it took more than a prospecting rapper Jack Black, who arrived in 1986, to give me the word. He taught me, in the summer of 1985, how to dig a ditch (it is a very real thing) and told me that when he was 14 he had his Chao Farmer father over the land with a shovel and quite quickly made his way west and north out of the U.S.A. "I died here," he said, "and it changed my whole way of going." His eyes were blue, as he remembered.

In Prince George and 50 sparsely populated villages like it, people died inside, the land, the climate, the odds, all the bloody works of Ottawa and Victoria and the 100s who controlled the railway, the rail, the resources and the highways. To get out of bed on some

morning was either defiance or cowardice, depending on the weather or your partner. If faith elsewhere moved sometimes, there it was defiance that came first to move you to faith. Sometimes this kind of defiance is the most common side of despair, not sometimes the machinist aspect of violence. Like art it can wear many faces. Maybe the town actually did have at one time a hotel with a bar 100 yards long and six women on roller skates. The importance of that belief cannot be overestimated. It became a defined and necessary fact. That bar was true, the truth itself which also could exert some control (not absolute dominion) in that place by grafting there in its midst 100 yards of something that anywhere else five yards of it would serve as well. At first this raising of a myth is a kind of divinely inspired mischief, but finally it impinges on us, not, as one, and is remembered and unaltered.

Contemporary civil disobedience carries with it some of the kind of accolade for any but the leaders, the stars, who more often than not now turn mob lobbying into commercial propositions for themselves. The defiance I'm remembering here is three parts revenge and one part workaday anger. It is done by itself and with one's humanity at stake. It is not possible to join up to daily. When we defy we become more than ourselves for a moment, or even a lifetime. Dr Spock reported that he felt

continued on page 52

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# LAST TANGO CONTINUED

embarrassed when he sat down for the first time with journalists in New York. And well he might: In our incomprehensible act he gave up his real person, his real self, his personal ability to defy, for a lifetime license to bubble with discontent. The purpose of remaining free and self-sufficient is to be able to defy at a moment's notice. For instance.

In the summer of 1941, just before I was 18, I went to Prince Rupert and signed on a colonial government ship as third cook, 15 hours a day, seven days a week, \$63 a month. The ship was about 2,700 tons, was chartering seaborne churches and was operated by a shrewd round-lifted man who was 71 years old and had, for 45 years, been tending these waters. He was generally lovable and loved by his crew, but there was a Commander on board from Ottawa who was in charge of the scientific surveys the government was making. He thought he captured the ship. In fact, because it was wartime, some two-hundred in Bytown had given him a piece of paper to say so. The ship, which looked like a yacht as the outside and the bottom of a coal mine below. In floating Ottawa magazine, would have been on the beach in a minute without old J.J., the captain, in charge, but the Commander was hard to reason with.

Finally a compromise was reached. J.J. would take sailing orders during the eight hours the surveys were being made, but for the rest of the time he would be vice captain and, in such, he ordered the Ottawa type to remain below from sunset to sunrise. Confined to quarters. At first the Commander ignored the order. J.J. didn't really mind that. He had a slaughter and a spit of nicotine on the bridge and when the hydrographer appeared after hours he would be met by slaughter and spit. J.J. was perhaps the best slaughter man around at a time when slaughter was prevalent, and he could dance his adversary back across the deck and through his cabin door as if he were being attacked by a six-shooter.

This picture of BC-Ottawa (1941) Canada's minimum has become, for me, a private image that contains both a golden age and the seeds of its decay. The centerpiece is the Commander, cool, middle-aged, dignified, gloved a gentleman by profession, knowledgeable in the pursuit of his petty power, doing a sort of Stasfeldt slope across the deck to lean on the railing for a few well-earned puffs on his pipe as the hope of lighting the burden of having to be here away from the centre of things, and being interrupted — interrupted — by a living hyperbole, a person both mischievous and melodramatic, a man

driven mad (the Commander was) by a misunderstanding. Here is someone fighting a marginal action and spilling real blood in a war that exists only on his own private realm. Good business, what does he want? But for the slaughter man it is all real. The ship is real, the necessity of his command is real and this place is real. Tethered here among beautiful fjords, in a bay full of fish, comfortably nestled in all around with mountains shot through with canals and topped by growing timber, if he could not dance and stand and act it out all day every day of his life he might, just might, get it across to the Commander from Ottawa that "You Can't Take This Away From Me."

But it was taken away, of course. Real continued to grow and so are most of the dollars. And we seem happy. There is a unity in luck, where once there was a lack of unity. We've grown up now in BC. Clear-eyed. Civilized. Cooperative. The commanders don't bother to leave the centre of things anymore; they stay home in other places all over the real world and give sailing orders via Telex and conference calls, and buy us off with promises that they now do really love us for our mind and not just our body.

We keep saying we're very much in charge, but the maritime act from old captain J.J. to lovely young things took place modestly and seriously behind the scenes, while one of the great political acts of our history unfolded out front. It was a sad, comic catastrophe during which some great horses were done, and BC became a puzzle to the rest of the country. For 25 years W. A. C. Bennett led our government and stayed in power largely by buying us with our own money, but also because in him, and especially his close cohort, Phil Gaglardi, there were strands of the old workable defiance, staples of ancient and profitable ranching that echoed from the essence of our remembered history. No people is innocent of the perpetuation of its government. Wacky Bennett was a pretty good slaughter man himself, but suddenly, almost unexpectably, he stopped shooting, and last year the slaughter took place without immediate pain. The Slaughter are gone for good and so are the crying. Echoes don't bring, you fade. The new regime is not an echo, it's only the pale remembrance of the dark fist of socialism, and most people are pretty relieved about that.

I suppose that is not how a people uses and manages experience that its way of addressing the world (in style, if style be the place) comes. I doubt that it is any more than mere structure that follows function, and that content (which with humans is essentially a negative component) doesn't always influence function that totally which is "in" seen by others from whatever sufficient value.

continued on page 54

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### LAST TANGO continued

large points in time or space. For instance, to be a logger or a miner or a fisherman or a Quebec Vascouvertic is to have one's life structured by the calling, but not given total form. And, on the content side, to grow up, leave the nesting dance, perform its various mortgages and other responsibilities do not make us collectively who we are nearly so instantly as the way we see and manage together the experience of our own and others' demands upon us and assumptions about us.

One assumption about BC, for instance, is that it is the most American of Canada's provinces. Actually it is the most Canadian. It lives in a gill-rigged and gill-mild sea. Now by selling itself row to the world, maintaining a wretchedly abject internationalism which keeps it culturally anonymous and is no cover-up for the sad truth that it has been for a long time a project torn and a jet-set disaster. The Ocean front elsewhere did it easy to make aerial demands on the pretty where on the West Coast and our sequences to them make further assumptions not only logical but probable. Beyond this, there is a kind of double indemnity at work. The easy demands and assumptions made about us by Japan, Europe and America are also made by central Canada's commercial, cultural and governmental establishments. Add to this the fact that the people who live in the lower left-hand corner of BC's map see demanding and assuming in much the same way about the people who live outside of Greater Vancouver. The surface of BC's problem of identity is chaos, its underlying realities are more often than not hidden, and the solutions people come up with are often only politics or demagoguery.

In the light of our Canadianness, BC's "ethnic" experience has come simply to this: we have been driven from our original stance by the expectations of other people's aims and expectations upon us, and by our own responses to those pressures. And it must be understood that the natural state of both the land and the people is a very different one, a condition of it who have been adults here for generations or more — and particularly those of us from outside Greater Vancouver — know to be the basic material from which our emotional fabric is woven.

It would have been better for us if we had not joined Confederation. Canada has always been an Atlantic crescent whose tail with Europe and the Boston-New York-Washington axis are extreme and compelling. It is obvious that Canada's level of awareness of the Pacific would be better controlled and more profitable to BC if the Rockies ended her jurisdiction. Our national division, unrecognized 100 years ago, was to remain

continued on page 86

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## LAST TANGO

as Crown Colony until such time as our strength would let us go it alone. No other part of Canada has had quite this potential. We command a coast, a voice of the Orient, and we are many times wealthier (and have a greater variety of wealth) than most countries of comparable size. It is a real force, this headlight, and it has further helped to shape the picture we and others have of us. Others depend on our confusion, our divided energies, our failure to have acted. Our picture of ourselves is a debilitated one we look for monsters and outside help because we have not always trusted our

abilities, and we have been consumed out of much of our heritage. For ourselves, no matter how loyal we may say we are to Crown and Canada and to Canada's own need to stay independent, there remains the visceral knowledge that we not only should have gone it alone but that we could have. The reason we didn't, the hard swings of history that derailed Confederation, the interesting effects of Greater Vancouver constantly on the nod, the lack of final way and strength, these things have not stopped us from feeling the emotional tugs of our natural separatism.



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FUN FOR ALL FOREVER!

But separation is, perhaps correctly, a wish and distant hope. We are joined, while remaining only peculiar and sometimes not quite understandable to those who don't live here. The ghost of old J. still stands on his bridge, somehow now a fading syndrome (instead of real history, but otherwise the province should be familiar to Canadians every way. We do not absorb immigrants, we are overrun by them. We have so real culture, nor do we honestly want one, to stem the tide of outside influences. And beyond that, Canadians may consider this when they're contemplating BC (Here there should be a grim finger pointing into the future.) When your stake in your own profitable economy and your wealth goes the way you think because so small that they come to shape your motivations or your objectives, the result is that you also stop thinking of your curvable home territory as having any challenge or identity for you. But do you feel that it will benefit from your own sense of locality or the energy of your personal attention. You begin to see it as something that simply becomes privilege. A beautiful house you hardly live in, work. And then, consequently, politics, life itself are devoted partly to negotiating with it for more, more, more.

If this be true, then what we have to look forward to is living in a version of a Middle Eastern Sherkhidom. The distance over now between us and one of the Sherks of Arabi (one of his comfort-giving, resource supplies is short needed. There, cows are around and try to invent countries. And the last spontaneous outbreak of culture was a raw shape to the begging bowl of a child named I-ben-Shed who squats in the very moment in the shade of a wall in which there is a locked door protecting the local representative of the Standard Oil Company.

Where are the delirium? But why exorcise the premeditated angst? It is stronger, perhaps, than anything else in BC. The ruins of unmet material necessities about the place all have arising grains of truth in them. Yet no proof of mature responsibility seems. No matter where you go you will see that we are beautiful, light and spoiled rotten. It's easy to think that if all our useful and moral human energy were stored in one battery you couldn't light your way to nearby oblivion. But hold a swim in English Bay on New Year's Day, a birthday derby or a scrimmage by the Grand Prix of football team, the BC Lions, and watch out.

There are people who believe that all 360,255 square miles of us is a set for an American movie to be shot by, say, John Ford. Actually, it is a set for a Canadian movie, and it's probably already been shot by, say, us. ■



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Besides the community energy that developed, there is a second effect that is very interesting, especially in view of its contrast with the explosively determining state of Vancouver's official city government, downtown mall scene and freeway threat, as this city begins to look more and more like the hedonistic concrete graveyard in the United States. In the decade previous to this one the Vancouver scene got together in a family, but as artists, as poets who took the small bourgeoisie path to the city which they would remain proud outsiders writing lyrics in basements, while outside the little windows the politicians and police and realtors ruled their turf.

But the cooperatives have brought the artists together so that they can't help but see that they are people, with similar views or histories. Now they not only share the mid-twentieth-century trip, they also turn away from the collective "art" trip. The poems and satirists and novelists are more than they are interested in doing together, but not the things if you ask Lionel Kearns what he is. It's not likely to say, "a poet." More likely he'll reply "third baseman for the Granville Grange Beavers." At least during the season.

The Zephys are one of the basest teams in the United States League, the community alternative to the professional sports run by foreign businessmen in Vancouver. The track spent proceeds on the diamond, where the events are soon forgotten, the windings are not kept or published, and all the billygoats with their funny names share a joint with the second basemen when they manage to hit a double. The scene is not Jerry Park and is not a team's Vancouver. But then the Grange Winery Supply was not the Tamarack Krew.

I suppose a lot of readers will know that Tamarack is the archetypal establishment literary magazine in Canada, or at least Toronto. There a subscriber will find most of the big names in Canadian poetry and fiction, and sometimes a poem or story. Most readers will know that George is Vancouver's beloved French newspaper. Probably a very few in eastern Canada will know about the *Wingtip Supplement*. *Wingtip* supplies the literary magazine with the largest circulation in the country. The annual price run is about 20,000 compared with 2,000 for Tamarack and 300 for the average little mag. Furthermore, all copies are given away free; many stuffed into George, others pressed out at schools or on the beach.

*Wingtip Supplement* is printed in tabloid format, designed for office, and given to, again, cooperative production. It has the highest quality work of any literary magazine in the country. But its most interesting feature is its *lowliness*. Because as poets can be gathered and distributed on short notice, it can be planned to coincide with any event of literary interest. When American poet Ed Dora and English poet Jeremy Phryne visited the city for a series of lectures and readings, the WS put out a Dora-Phryne issue, with photos, poems, criticism and notes of the public readings.

An emerging figure on the WS ground is a site Penny. He is one of the ex-San Francisco poets who play an important part in the local writing scene. It is largely by his organizing that the WS has for the past two years been making books — and they can be made just about as fast as the magazine is. Penny, the balding, bearded, enormous, earnest at the head of this sprawling place. He gets up every morn-

ing at five and reads Marston-Lentost books at the beginning of a long work day. He lives in a commune, such, and that is the quietest time of his or the house's day. Nobody knows just how many activities he handles because nobody gets to all the places he has to go, but a few among them might be named. He has recently finished a sociology thesis concerning his work at the megacore. He is taking another postgraduate degree in philosophy as well as teaching at UBC. He is on the UBC Senate and Student Council, and also writes two book reviews a week for the student newspaper, articles for George, poetry, a journal, philosophy papers, etc. And he edits the *Wingtip Supplement*, jockeying between them personally before they go to be printed. Penny does not play softball because he can't stand still as long as a left fielder has to. His apartment, at which he will defend you while drafting an analysis of post-Severnian Marston-Lentost.

Penny's idea for the book series is that the local scene be made clear, here and elsewhere. The books cost a little more than a dollar each and there will be one from each poet who has contributed occasionally to the city's writing in the past decade. The idea of the city has been of prime importance to the Vancouver poets all that time — maybe because it's the only one we have, maybe because it is a visually defensible, and because it sharpens them as it designs out poems, and maybe because without it we would all still be living between the mazes and pick-uphouses in the rest of the province, a few thousand miles from the nearest bookstores and universities.

But New Star Books, official publishing house for the scene, is only one of many little presses on the West Coast. The big presses are all in a distant capital called Toronto and there are many poets in Vancouver as there are country and western, again in Nova Scotia.

Takelooks specialists in the new poets and Canadian plays. It was the first press to take a flyer on the nation's dramatists and hence, in the usual fashion, a Vancouverer pride in the remarkable emergence of drama publishing in Toronto. Since his publisher the young academically oriented writers from the University of British Columbia Bill Bennett's *Blackwater Press* even does books or something from the non-graduate community. Poetry books are printed by a dozen other underground or up-or-in-the operators who will be assigned or added pink at a silence that they weren't mentioned here.

But with all this, the publishing of poems has always been secondary to the actual reading of them here. For many people in the late Fifties and early Sixties, public poetry readings were a joke

perpetrated in a coffee shop decorated with brilliant posters somewhere at Montreal. But in Vancouver, which has always taken San Francisco more seriously, the readings were the primary experience of poetry. This was both a necessity and a blessing.

In 1960, Canadian (i.e., Toronto-Montreal-Vancouver) poetry was unknown and nearly unobtainable in Vancouver. If poetry was to become familiar to Pacific east, the local poets would have to invent it, and in their days it was easier to read it to an audience than to get it circulated in print. That's a simplified version of how the vocal tradition was re-created in West Point Grey, and a scene that never happened to Canadian verse.

Now it is possible to attend a public reading practically every day of the week here, and there are a lot of private ones, too. There are some poets in the city who make a major part of their modern accounts by reading at the various museums, art galleries and otherwise shaded backdrops. The longest one-on-one reading on record was by Charles Olson at UBC in the summer of 1963. It lasted seven-and-a-half hours and was transcribed by a poet who turned off the light and was home in bed, presumably to read none. The shortest was by Bill Barrett, the chanting poet, at the Bix-N-Gallery in the fall of 1971. Barrett focused his last attention and headed for the door as soon as the hat had been passed. It is ironic that.

Sometimes the theatre at these readings is accidental, or at least spontaneous. There was once a reading held at the New Era Social Club as a benefit for the grumpy mutants now being published by one of the city's chief publishers. The benefit had been well publicized in the *Georgie Grange*, so the candle-lit room was packed with Friends and Presidents in their worsted coats, mostly legging boots, and double coats. There was a crowd of sweet and happy perfume, incense and some lighted vegetable matter. Several large dogs squeaked their wet frames among the bottles on the floor. Children sat with limbs hanging from backpacks. Tape recorder microphones hung from a loose electrical wire angled in places to the ceiling, and one corner of the largest room was lit by bright spotlights in and of the video tape machine perched next to the table where the yellow gaps of Caliban had been placed when they weren't circulating.

It was to be a group reading by several of the better-known downtown poets and a few strangers, but the West Coast tradition for five years took care of that. It all started when the first poet, a former Vancouver literary who now lives in a tent in the interior, was half-way through his presentation. He was

continued on page 12

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reading a delicate poem about his love or some such poetic rambling his knocking from his day dream, when a young woman from the audience approached him and began doing just this.

Everyone, or at least this reporter, thought at first that it was the usual bit of kokone, apocryphal because the poet kept on reading, and this was in the act. But then he started to remove his clothing. Soon some socks and shirt began to be thrown into the Boulder area, from the darker corners of the room. I had recently returned here from the east so I was probably the last person in the building to witness suspecting that the whole thing was photographed. Then a horde of hands started working on my beard. Soon this poetry reading was forgotten but the ceremony's solemnity was at high energy. I should add that we have yet to see a subsequent scene of the little magazine that was purportedly bootlegging.

There are lots of Vancouver poets who have gone to jail in the past 10 years. I got thought of seven while writing that sentence. But Michael Sawyer was the first to be arrested for his poetry. This is because he is a Neon Poet, a kind of right-wing neo-fascist. Christine Landisberg. His work shows on the sky-line because it consists of neon advertising signs altered to produce (these

mixed social criticism). He yanks switches or intercoms built to create large red or green messages such as BANK OF CANADA or WELL OIL OF CANADA OR GEORGIA OAKS HOTEL. The newspaper printed copies of his poems on their front pages and what happened poet can claim as much? He was approached on the roof of the Hotel Vancouver with his hands brighter look, so we eat only imagine what poem might have passed for George Stein Landmark.

Paulo Rios consciousness is bolstered by the presence of numerous Japanese poets and actors around town. One of the most famous is Toku Mitsu Sengai, sculptor, actor, poet and official photographer for the Koma-Langue. Toku was discovered by Japanese on the streets of Tokyo and told that he looked just like a Vancouver freak. So he went up as Japanese and Gaijin, where posing motorcycle cops growl him by name and demands strange, seriously make out what he is trying in his superlatif but elliptical English.

I was able to make out at a party the other night that he is now joining together a hippie phalanx. The artists already had done at the ubiquitous Vancouver Art Gallery last summer, for a program called by a long name with "Toku Gawa & Friends".



The claims are not forgotten in the New Era.

Many people, such as my wife, are suspicious of all this surreal theatre in the art and let me out here on the edge of the U.S. caribbean zone. They believe that the packages will drive out the surreal follow in my art, or worse, that we will take the Tofers (I am didn't run for mayor last year) seriously. But I point out that the thesaurus is a lot more useful in less than the scene at a Governor General's luncheon or a cocktail lunch with a Toronto publisher.

Besides, how could we take the Dadaist seriously when we remember, for instance, the first Grande Grange Zephyr practice last spring? (That's late February in BC.)

There is an old game old belligerent play called "500". One guy hits fingers out, and you catch them getting 100 points for a 15. 15 for a one-bow, and so on. If you miss then you get more points. The Zephyr was playing a game of 500, and the team mascot, a fat old female dog named Joe, companion of right-fighter Mr. Blue, was watching it out with the rest of them.

Half way through the first game, the poet Lionel Kettle had 100, poet Dwight Gardner had 75, poet Brad Robinson had 135, poet George Bowring had 25 and Joe the dog had 250. She's terrific at hand one-bow, and she would make the Zeds' lineup but the one's throw any better than Mr. Blue, and he's not so good.

That is not poetry, and it is probably not even art, but it is the West Coast, where the showmen grow in penny like a rain forest, where you forget, wonder and cry-magical and walk where you can, trying not to step on the stage if you do step on a slip, Gerry Gilbert, the poet, will write in revenge. If you step on Gerry Gilbert you step on me, my friend, and that's the way things are out here.

Right now it's raining outside the window in front of me but the kids are playing without any of those fancy yellow rain capes they have back east, those silly thinkers. I've just come back from Bill Huffer's bookstore where I had a cup of me and a game of Go, and, moreover we're playing the East End Poets. Back in Montreal, where I used to live, they're in the club bar, wondering if they can get the show off the ballpark so they can get those overalls spinning and the poets are arguing in the newspapers about their concern, using their real names and hoping the newspapers still print their right.

Out here we couldn't really rely on We turn on the CBC and get the news three hours later than the poet's work. I read and I back five years old, in Canada's National Magazine, which is coming out any day now. ■

## BARRETT here page 33

ment-subsidized restaurant in the light-house building. There are good food, the politicians in Victoria, but it's obviously too dangerous for you."

His platform style, mocking his own neo-hair dimensions, has elements of Franklin D. Roosevelt in it, combined with some of the theatrics of a British hiker. When Barrett called him a member of the Waffle, in reference to Barrett's signing the original Western Manifesto, Barrett retorted by calling Barrett a "poodle." And he threatened that if they would get into a debate on Quebec he'd tell him a steep scotch.

The smoking stance — either they don't smoke — seemed to flourish the 71-year-old Barrett, who relishes the old too-toe style that enabled him to destroy the previous New NDP leader. It was a masterly campaign, kept under control all the way by one of those supposedly theory-driven social workers who hides his deep humanity behind a line of boxes.

The outstanding sociologist, not that Barrett, despite his background, did not become a socialist until his long immersion in the American experience.

Before the turn of the century grandfather Isaac, an immigrant from Sweden, was chairman of the Independent Jewish Political Club in Winnipeg. Father Sam, who was passed at Pseudotribute and is now completely blind, was a veteran of the Winnipeg General Strike; he also moved to California and became a member of the Independent Jewish Political Club in the World, before settling into Vancouver's opium bowl, the East End.

Sam the Russian Man became a bit of a legend with his first stand in those tough Depression days, giving away buns at the end of the day if the fat had made enough money. Today 70-year-old Sam Barrett, resident of a home sponsored by the Jewish Home for the Aged, credits those door-to-door walks as a junk dealer and fruit peddler with giving young Dave some of his understanding and affection for people.

Prophet Barrett lights that expensive laugh, launching into exonerating nostalgia. "There's my golden old man selling golden buns. Freezing his golden ass. So cold he'd put a banana and the skin would go like-shake!" Barrett's conversation is full of low-shake! "We'd have a bottle of Scotch in the glove compartment. He'd tell the cop in the heat to get in the car to get warm. I'd think, 'Oh, warm as a 25 Ford!' The cop would come out with his arms and blowing. I could never understand it."

We're doing the nostalgia trip one night in the dining room of the usually expensive Hotel in Victoria, the opulent beamed ceiling reflecting the candlelight while the blue-rust towels, laid up at the coast beer hall, whisper and post

guardedly toward our table, and Barrett is rambling about the East End with his Lands, Fronts and Water Resources Minister, Bob Williams, who also was stated there. The East End is exactly what it sounds like — the crowded, unimpressive working class area where the immigrant groups settled, a million miles in ambience across Vancouver from the beaches and bluffs of Point Grey and the leafy concerns of Shaughnessy Heights. It could be a section snipped out of Marmite New or Hamilton, selected from the men of last Vancouver.

In Barrett's hands that East End background takes on something of Leo Greer and the Brewery Boys, the fruit peddler's son and his pals mugged on the sidewalk outside the police station, with one of their arrested members inside, all shouting "Cosmos the Revolution — every cop has to have a B.A."

Barrett remembers with plus the East End. Instantly returns. When Museum came on the screen the East End kids boomed. When Hitler came on the screen they booed. And when Madonna King came on they booed. The good guys and the bad guys were almost in contrast on page 65.

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## BARRETT

the Klan and and the GCF were the good guys. Most of all, Barrett never forgot, displaced Britannia High School. "We had a football team and 10 swimmers — spread to pools — for 12 guys. And we were supposed to play rugby against West Point Grey. We were the underdog. 'British Indians' and we were all treated as if we were middle-class English schoolboys. Incredible."

As we were crossing the Empress lobby, Bob Williams and I stopped to talk to Geoff Andrew, an old academic figure from the University of BC, and we introduced the new premier. Andrew hasn't changed a hair from the days 40 or 50 years ago when he and Mike Pearson and the rest of the academic-mandarin elite had their Canadian neighbors polished at Oxford. The man's words, in my opinion, his accent still have that comfortable stamp. As we walk away, Dave Barrett says, "I can't dig the Oxford crap." The East had seen plenty.

Perhaps it was that respect to meeting these well-known West Point Grey rugby players again at UBC that led Barrett off to Seattle University, a small Jesuit college in the American city 150 miles south of Vancouver, establishing links in college towns, visiting after school in Seattle on a job interview and throwing bundles of papers off the back of delivery trucks. "The vomit of BC

didn't mean their future premier would turn to dust Seattle trash!"

At Britannia, Barrett had climbed his way through, at Seattle he continued the pattern, spending hours after hours playing basketball in the gym. It wasn't until his final year, when the scholarship of the best future began to have some effect on him, that Barrett became serious



about his future and life. He was particularly influenced by two Papal encyclicals, the *Aeternae Veritatis* of 1951 and *Quadragesimo Anno* of 1951. In the former, Pope Leo XIII asserted that labor is not a commodity and gave his backing to both labor legislation and trade unions. In the latter, Pope XII reaffirmed the rights of labor within the Catholic Church.

"Along with Pope John's *Pacem in Terris*," says Barrett, "these are the

Christian instructions that are profoundly and historically progressive — remarkable even by today's standards."

"You've got to realize this was the early 1950s and Joe McCarthy was on the rise. Truman had just fired General MacArthur. There was sexual pressure on Catholic universities to stop discussing communism in the classroom." One day a plane dropped leaflets on the Seattle U campus that read: STOP THE ANTI-CATHOLIC CONSPIRACY AGAINST AMERICA — ELECT GUY MACARTHUR. Barrett's subsequent public image is apparent again when the subject comes around to his own religion. Depending on his mood, on who is interviewing him, he tells himself of an opposing, a statement as "a prearranged line. I am a pious fish and cannot feed ourselves." He does not tell himself or his inspired religion too seriously — that attitude is reserved for the human race.

(It was an interesting aspect of both journalism and politics to observe the many newspaper treatments of Barrett in the days following his election. The press, which had never revealed to the public Barrett's religious background, announced that he was the first Canadian provincial premier "of the Jewish faith" or "of Jewish extraction." It moved *Seattle Times* to write a letter to

continued on page 68

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the Greens and Mael, pointing out that certain press practices were liable to do exactly what Hitler tried to do — make "Jew" a dirty word.)

Despite his East End background and his family influence, it is intriguing to note that it was not until he emerged from Seattle U with a degree in philosophy and these Populists/socialists among his contemporaries that he became a confirmed socialist. There were two ragtaggy fellows as him at home: The genial Sam, a Fabian type of socialist, taught his son to love people. But his mother (now Mrs. Rose Gordon — her partner having been divorced) was far more radical and committed to action. When Dave Barnett was seven, his mother wrapped his head in Mercuriochroon bandages and put him on a float in a Spanish Civil War protest parade. Neighbors used to roll bandages to be sent to Dr. Norma Bellows in China. "I'm not a Christian," says Canada's newest premier, "but in my view it's difficult for people not to end up as dramatic situations if they apply Christian principles."

For him, applying those principles after Seattle meant a brief, outspoken social worker position with juvenile delinquents in Okla. prison back in Vancouver. He was the first in Canada to establish the principle of allowing youth athletic teams outside the walls to compete. (Later, he had a group of inmates win third prize in the BC Geo-Axi Drama Festival.)

He applied to the UBC School of Social Work for his master's program, but again there was that, well, English cut to the Canadian education system: "The social work department and I hadn't finished my high-school French class you realize? That's so typical of social workers."

"I really love social work that I'm not so crazy about social workers."

So it was back to the more open American society, with the latest brothers at Seattle helping him get into the prestigious social work school at St. Louis University despite his "mediocre" scholastic record. But by now Barnett is a more serious young man, having been granted to the former Shirley Hawkins of Vancouver, a shy Anglican girl with enormous eyes who loved to paint. By the end of his first year at St. Louis, Barnett is president of his class and winner of the first scholarship of his life — the \$600 tuition that came to him on time for another year.

Further Westley, dean of the graduate school, accompanied the Canadian to his office. Barnett sat nervously while the scholar walked around him several times saying nothing.

"Finally," recalls the Premier, "he said, 'You can go now.'"

"What did I do?" queried Barnett.

"I just wanted to take a look at the first Jew who ever got money out of the Catholics."

It was the time in St. Louis when an ambitious young politician by the name of Tom Eagleton was starting his rise through civic politics. Barnett was the first student ever to be allowed to do field study work in the St. Louis County Juvenile Court.

On his first day he fumed and fidgeted and circumscribed in the back of the courtroom as he heard a Judge Noel Weinstone sentence youth after youth to Belleville, a Missouri detention home notorious among social workers. Judge Weinstone finally adjourned court and called Barnett into his chambers.

"What's bothering you?" he asked. "You can't send those kids to Belleville," Barnett blurted out.

"And who," said the judge, "are you?" The upshot of it all was that Weinstone took out his wallet, handed the monthly social worker student \$30 and ordered him to deliver a report in a week on Belleville — which Barnett himself had never seen.

Barnett delivered a devastating report and, he recalls with quiet satisfaction, "Weinstone never sent a boy there again."

By the time Barnett got his MA, he had five scholarships and an offer from an employer. Judge Weinstone, by now a Barnett fan, to finance the young Canadian and his family through three years of law school. There was also a proud Sam Barnett, who once called his son a "bean and a tramp" for playing hockey, arriving on the train for graduation ceremonies.

"Am I still a bean and a tramp?" said Dave, BA, MA, law student, as he met his father at the train station. "No, art," replied Sam the Beans Man, and they embraced.

It is perhaps no surprise that Dave Barnett's long immersion in the American dream only served to increase his socialism, his compassion. His decision to turn down the lucrative St. Louis offer was as much a result of his preoccupation about the American political process as it was his longing for the warm and continuous of BC ("It gets awfully dry in St. Louis, boys did we miss the ocean?") It is a measure of Dave and Shirley Barnett's feeling for the atmosphere of BC — this is the man, remember, who's never been to Montreal — that they always spare the 20-minute plane ride between Victoria and Vancouver, insisting instead on piloting their propeller-driven plane over the BC forest for the literally two-hour cruise through the Gulf Islands.

He has tremendous respect for the American people but little for their political system. "It is a just government by the Establishment. It's not well de-

continued on page 10

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**BARRETT** continued  
Jepson Barrett is the lightning rod, the result of a rich province's push complete over past years' neglect of the unfortunate and those at the lower end of the economic scale. "This job is just an extension of social work," he says. "I'll tell you that. Social workers have more business in politics than I ever do."

His beliefs in the use of social welfare funds make Barrett sound closer to classic Mackenzie King liberalism than to the modern-day Trudeauism with their make-work social experiments.

It was Barrett who, soon after taking power, called a Victoria meeting of provincial welfare ministers and put his backing behind the powerful Claude Castonguay, the Quebec social affairs chief who has challenged Ottawa for control of all social welfare funds.

The party provincialism of Social Credit is gone, but one suspects that Barrett's U.S.-based personality will lead to him putting pressure on Ottawa just the same. Whereas Barrett's nationalism was a product of a small-town mentality, Barrett's feelings are the product of his awareness of growing provincial strength—particularly in the current confused Ottawa situation. He likes the use of power and he can sense where it runs.

In the background at the rearview of fury, in the closely knit East End style, he protects his own and keeps a wary eye from intruding on his family life. Shirley Barrett is a small, accomplished girl who tries to keep her last-of-her-kind husband humble by mending mild obscenities when he sits on the living-room couch and blazes claims at his own image on the TV screen.

There is Don, 13, and Joe, 15, one of BC's most promising little roomers—they accompanied with their mother to their father's graduation at Government House by checking their pants for leavens of their suit—and 12-year-old Ross.

There is Buddy Dave, with his taste for Tiffany lamps in his redecorated office and his Ex-Batters Rugby Club (still the only club he has ever joined) and his remarkably wide-ranging reading; the model like to write a book someday on Admiral Wilberforce Clouston, the head of Nazi military intelligence who was executed for his part in the beach plot against Hitler. One of his models is Willy Russell.

"It's not a very excited person," Barrett says. "It's just that I've had a wide range of experiences in a short period of time—from the East End to the islands."

Somewhere in that journey has been the making of a very modern social democrat, a man who can say, "The 'good, I have no ideological hang-ups," but who can also say, "If there's one thing I've learned... it's how to kill."

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# CBC RADIO

### BEN METCALFE (top page 38)

The *Greenpeace* crew was at the test site at Miramichi, and is a large way Metcalfe was responsible for getting them there. He was worried.

To distract him, I asked him to tell me about himself.

Ben Metcalfe was born in Winnipeg, *Halifax* 1919, lived and went to school there until the age of 14 when he was taken to England by his parents. Until he came back to Canada in 1933, those years were his only credentials as a Canadian.

"I went to school briefly in England and worked as an office boy in a brewery. At 16 I joined the Royal Air Force and went out into the Empire getting and bearing *Watusi* on the northwest boomers of India. It was a war in the tradition of the British Empire, an unusual positive experience that would get maybe six lines in *The Times*."

During World War II he served as an *armoured car* gunner at the RAF, and he got around. Eventually he landed in Paris, where he began work as a reporter and sports editor for the *Canadian Daily Mail*. He stayed four years.

"I'd got married a couple of times." He drops it casually. "This time to a Frenchwoman, and I have two daughters by that marriage. Ironically enough, their stepfather, André Metcalfe, is a nuclear physicist with the French Atomic Energy Commission. There's nothing political, I assure..." and we laugh our little laugh in this morning's distant fact of a mushroom cloud.

He left the *Daily Mail* and devoted his time to more serious writing. Soon he was broke and came back to Canada to pick up his penwork vocation's grant. He joined the *Winnipeg Tribune*, but after two years returned to Europe to work for Reuters and free-lance in Spain, France and London for English-language papers around the world.

"All this time I was writing books." Metcalfe continues. "Not publishing books, but writing them. Novels, plays, journals, dramatizations, stories that wouldn't go away. My writing is that time took a very personal turn. It was all very fragmented and totally undisciplined. I am basically untrained, you know."

Well, no, I wouldn't have known. He continues with authority on almost everything: education, architecture, tapies, optimism, public relations, the corporation, fishing, politics, degrading, *Dommon Day*. The CBC gives him that kind of space. The world is his oyster and though Metcalfe is no poet he's certainly an irritant in search of one. He is also in search of himself. Or so he begins to gather. The mask is cracking. Something like confusion appears.

"I escaped all the alphabetical folkies, like BA, MA, PhD, and for a long time

this was a factor in my identity, because I was different from the people I moved with. I was an intellectual wall, but a voracious bloody reader. I see everything as one there wasn't any more. *Rabelais* at 16. *Maugham* at 21 - that sort of thing." The life of the reporter seemed the easier effort, and yet the experience he gives now is of someone who has things very much together. There's a contented philosophy informing all his utterances, and the toughness, wit, courage to drive his messages through loud and clear.

"I used to be frightened by the num-

ber of faces of myself, my faculty for camouflage. I was a sort of quick-change artist." For instance, he could be at a cocktail party in the Canadian Embassy in Paris and end up in a gal overcoat. He would persuade the officials to let him out because he had to be best man at a god wedding the next morning, when he would turn up wearing a top hat, ascot and frock coat.

"Hugo Manning, an English poet who worked with me at Reuters, used to say that I was essentially a comic figure and the sooner I realized it the better. I could continue on page 39

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are the comic side of myself and even considered being a stage comedian or someone who wrote funny things if something possibly witty occurred to me now. I don't resent it." As an inveterate punster he has referred to the finale as a "tadpole thanks" and the TV series *Jabba* as the "Windang Steps."

A crumpling propaganda master, a comic figure, a quick-change artist. But isn't that a problem for a man whose intelligence is so keen, whose private wit is so sharp that he is a serious writer? I don't know.

"Have you caught up with yourself?"

"Almost. Perhaps in the past three years."

The phone rings. We have stopped laughing. It seems enough for one day.

By the time I returned to The Ego's Nest, radio contact with CP III had been lost. And demonstrations were spreading around the world. *Prisoner* was being presented by some of the Pacific Rim nations to stop the test. Australian high school students were refusing to study French. And the best the Canadian government could do was a pale imitation of a diplomatic protest note, which began, "The Canadian Embassy presents its compliments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and has the honor to inform the Government of the French Republic of the concern with which the Canadian Government views indications that France will resume nuclear tests in the South Pacific in the near future."

Once again, we were thankful for the post. Ben returned to Canada for the second time in 1955. He came back with a big Tolstoyan novel in his head: "Eusek" became a creature of these dimensions

We've noted that that kind of novel. Porter's *Notional Mosaic* had to come first. In Russia you get the novelist preceding the social analysis. Maybe in Canada it has to work the other way around. I can't see that, but it's crucial."

I asked him what period he placed his head book in.

"The middle days of the Hudson's Bay Company, up to the time the North West Company began to compete with them, the formative years of the Canadian idea. Canada was a very distinct for the British. In their search for the riches of the Orient, they ripped it off as they went by. It's still a resource colony, but not for the same people necessarily. That period was ripest not just for the people — and characters — but with affairs, politics, adventure, opportunism, exploitation. It seemed almost essential for a novel." The novel got written but the creative powers were exhausted in a return to journalism. At first, Metcalfe went prospecting in the North, but, almost accidentally, he became editor of the *Fin Floy Daily Messenger* for a short time.

"From Paris, to Winnipeg, to Fin Floy. Then Ross Mente, the editor of the *Preventer*, asked me to come to Vancouver. The old opportunist in me responded, and I was quickly very deeply involved. This has always been a problem of mine as a journalist, that I become involved with the things I was writing."

While he was with the *Preventer*, Metcalfe's by-line was synonymous with gritty, bygone-bureau interest stories. Many will remember his copyrighted 1957 article on Christian George Heines, the showboy without a

country who had been arising around the world on a Norwegian freighter for 16 months with no hope of getting off unless some country offered to take him. Arthur Heines' *Love in High Places* is based on that episode and the reporter as the book, Don Griffler, was shocked from the Metcalfe model. The Heines story aroused sympathy around the world and was taken up by the UN, although Heines lost because an embarrassment to his supporters, Metcalfe still feels that the stand he took was justified.

"For me," says Metcalfe, "the thing about the Heines story was the idea that Canada ought to be big enough to let the guy off the boat and give him a country," although the sign of the engaged, companionable reporter is still in his fiction and films. Ben says his involvement alienated him from his fellow journalists. "They were jealous. 'You ain't trust Metcalfe.' Just as they are very good about the Greenpeace situation. After Greenpeace I was too, the Vancouver *Star* stood back and looked at the space they'd given the story and were appalled. There was hardly room for the horseshoe and crownwood position. I'm always under suspicion, but the guy is still on."

By 1960 he was associate editor. Though he continued to do the occasional investigative feature story, he had to give up his theatre and art reviews. He approached the CBC to do a short daily commentary on theatre.

"I covered anything that claimed to be theatre, especially amateur theatre. This meant going out to dunker Rudebeck or West Vancouver, but I like to think it contributed to the development of professional theatre in the country. Metcalfe no longer has the daily drama commentary, but he's regularly heard on *Crater On Air*, a regional program. He travels across the country often to keep his eye on Canadian theatre and, since Nathan Cohen's death, a one of the few drama critics who grips the national scene. But his reputation remains chiefly regional. "Do you realize there are almost no books on drama criticism in this country?" He hopes to fill the gap and bring the dialogue about drama to the level of importance that poetry, even more than fiction, enjoys here.

"And then I'm also writing this book on over-fishing rods." Quick-change artist? I shouldn't be surprised, everyone knows he is a theatre thespian, and he is often heard on BC Goodshow. "Of course, the LSD experience was ironic." The double take again; and then he explains. It involves the involved reporter posture.

In 1959, Dr. R Ross MacLean, director of Hollywood Hospital in New Westminister, BC, invited him to observe the new clinical treatment for alcoholics, LSD. The experiments were pioneered

with married patients by Dr. Abram Heller at University Hospital in Saskatoon. Metcalfe observed, made notes, and was then administered a massive dose of LSD. He thought it would make a great story. It did. The public result was a series of articles for the *Preventer*, later put together as a booklet which gained a certain underground currency. Privately, the experiment was a revelation.

"I wasn't able to put my finger on it intellectually, but it was like looking through into the human experience rather than the literary experience. I can't pretend the LSD experience didn't change me."

It also changed his face. He was still the involved reporter, and that continued to a very bad trip for Ben. By 1963 he had left the *Preventer* and was free-lancing, about to set up his own public relations firm. He had been invited to a

LSD "cocktail party" in North Vancouver and arranged to do a story on it for the *Toronto Star*. By this time the underworld had hooked into the LSD trade and what happened at that "very responsible party" should never have happened to a two-guy like Metcalfe, though, as he puts it, "They started it was a link." They were two men, both called Burney, and in the drug trade that's just Ben didn't take the stuff, but it's hard to fake an acid trip. He was under suspicion but the jury came in. The result was that he was severely beaten up and nearly killed. His face was swollen and his jaw and eye socket shattered.

"Somewhere in a North Vancouver ditch there's an inch of lower mandible with two teeth on it," says Ben. "After 36 hours and some pretty psychiatric help from the two Burneys (one was apprehended a year later and confined to an institution for the criminally in-

sane), he was dumped on the doorstep of Hollywood Hospital. He underwent plastic surgery, which resulted in the head he now wears. It wasn't him."

Was this tangle with the underworld an inevitable outcome of his kind of journalism? That's part of it, Ben. Ben also thinks he has been rightly warned of playing the naughty boy, of delighting in testing the springs of authority. "Maybe there's something of that about Greenpeace," he says. And maybe that's what metcalfe has his critics. Most of us are unbalanced about authority, we love it and hate it. And we love and hate those who choose to flout it. Such people can appeal our desire for action or revenge, but they can also breed unconscious guilt in us that makes us feel bad."

Around 1970, Ben Metcalfe was taking a lot about ecology. The flooding of BC's Skeena River came up as an issue. It continued on page 76

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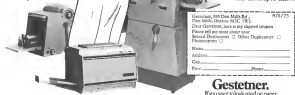
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"He came on Pop — just bugging the about my hair. All the guys wear it this way."

happened to be his favorite fishing river. He was righteously indignant and went directly to the heart of the matter. In a mild commentary he said: "The Skegit is our river, and we don't have any more access to flood it than we have to flood Stanley Park. We don't have to explain anything to Seattle City Light company. We don't have to tell them why we don't want it destroyed. We don't have to come up with alternatives for them. All we have to do is let them not touch our river, that's all." (The NDP government in BC seems to agree with that alarmingly simplistic but convincing point of view and have announced that they will not allow the flooding of the valley.)

When they were getting the Anishnabe protest under way, this kind of reasoning appealed to the founders of Greenpeace, Irving Stowe, Paul Cook and Jim Bohlen. They approached Metcalfe to get their case across. When the Greenpeace people wanted to do with their "counter-propaganda" was to undermine the official propaganda that claims the environmental problems are too big, too complex to solve. Greenpeace, on the contrary, says most of the problems can be solved with the word "No." They try to strip away the nonsense from the official line to reveal the destructive, meaningless core hidden in it. Metcalfe says they are a kind of stripping knife.

"That first boat ride was a fantastic experience, a floating messenger group and all that. Maybe it began like an epic trip, but it might be closer. When we had to make that terrible decision to ensure we were staying on the edge of fear, The Atomic Energy Commission kept delaying the test and we had been so sure in supporting our parameters beforehand. We were so institutionalized, we actually believed that, when the AEC announced they would explode the bomb on October 2, they would do it. The boat was held together by paint, the

weather was getting worse — the waves could be 40 feet high. We had had to supplies for six weeks, we were running out of fuel, our charter was almost up, we didn't have a spare radiator or steering gear. The decision to turn around was not mine, though I thought we should. If we couldn't go on, then we should not keep saying we were going on.

"Greenpeace Tom was amazed and that was it. When we arrived at Alert Bay the Kwakiwlt Indians took us in. They made us fishermen. We couldn't believe it. We were so humbled by that time, so stripped down, humiliated. We couldn't believe anyone would accept us. The Indians said they would like to do a dinner for us in their longhouse. Suddenly Daisy Seward, the daughter of the chief, told us they were going to make us Indians. That was rather beautiful — they didn't ask us or invite us, they told us they were going to make us Indians. They did that during the trip, which was the most apt thing they could have done. Their philosophy is that when the ego is in total command, man reaches his basest state, that of the cannibal when he doubts fellow man. They dance away the ego and when this goes the man is perfectly fine and at one with everything. They announced as with water and dove feathers."

Oddly enough, the experience of brotherhood which granted the crew of Greenpeace I led as a gift in the Vancouver agreement. The Trip I people were accused by the Trip Two people of being elitist. Ben admits they are elitist, because together they went through that rebelling, humbling of fear, together they were made fishermen by the Kwakiwlt. As chairman of Greenpeace International, however, Ben couldn't spend much time on indulging.

"If you want to talk about an elite I can tell you where to look. The beginning of the industrialization of Ben Met-

calfe was the Pierre Laporte disaster in Montreal during the FLQ crisis. These were wars, the people, the machine guns and video cameras turned on us, the cops on their motorcycles running over our heads to keep us in line. We were the enemy. Trudeau and his entourage were the *haute couture* of the *pompier families*. They were allowed to enslave. We weren't."

As walked out of his study, the little signs this society were caught my eye. It had been put there while he was away on Greenpeace. He hadn't taken it down.

My third visit was less formal. I didn't take the trip instructor and we swam like good suburbanites by the swimming pool, drank Scotch and chatted. Ben talked about Stockholm. The Greenpeace contingent joined the freshly but powerful coastal conference. They convinced the Pacific Rim delegates to make sure they would vote for the resolution against the French tests. They distributed MURKIN MOW ANCHOR buttons, they pointed, and they signed the Canadian delegation to vote against the tests. When the vote came up, Canada abstained. Ben says the GP contingent made so much trouble over the vote that Jack Davis, the Minister of the Environment, had to reverse Canada's position in plenary session.

By this time I felt I knew Metcalfe well enough to ask a question that had been on my mind all along. "The tests, it seems, will go on, but will you?" He didn't pause. "No. I'm so — what's the word? I was going to say I'm so — I have to use the word *dispar*. We're not-*dispar* people — we *dispar* here — but let's say — why be any about it? I don't want to go through this administrative trash anyone. I have become slightly reluctant to spend myself on this any further. You can make people feel guilty and make them comply with their *dispar* (fishes and pick up their *dispar* swimmers, but that's not where it's at. It's not the amateur who are polluting the world. It takes real experts to tell off a lake or a planet. I figure that it has something to do with changing the system, like recycling politicians instead of bottles. Maybe it's time for me to make the *dispar*'s route to the ivory tower."

Part of his depressive center from his bank with the Canadian government. His metaphor for the insincerity of the governmental approach is the *dispar* on white banking taken at the Stockholm conference. "Canada was beautifully associated with the United States and France who are both blowing off bombs to the water where the whales live. That's the insincerity, the cynicism, the PK gesture. It's like that gesture of *dispar* and *dispar* and *dispar* and *dispar* that grows around the Cu-

manco plant at Trail, BC. The garden fits very nicely into a potter and that's what the *dispar* PK smokes out. The *dispar* are over potter."

I decided to take a drive into the pool.

Was Greenpeace a potter too, or a ship of fools? Nuclear contamination is the ultimate pollution. The *dispar* can't stop it. Government can't. During his travels people were always asking Metcalfe, "Does your government support you in this action?" His answer was that governments don't support people, people support governments. The people, the *dispar*, have now chosen government in Australia and New Zealand that will at least try to stop the ultimate contamination. Now, when France says, "Get off these waters, we're going to blow off a bomb" is sent one can cover so much as 100,000 square miles of ocean, there will be at least a couple of governments saying, "We have a right to be on the high seas, and furthermore we are defending ourselves and the world against your madness." Pierre Trudeau wouldn't do that for diplomatic reasons, otherwise known as the United States of America and the Republic of France.

Earlier this year, Ben Metcalfe moved to Shawangau Lake on Vancouver Island. There he is going to write these books he has been promising himself for years. Although, with a quick-change artist, you never know. He likes action, he likes publicity, though it hasn't done him much good, there was the money problem and the writing problem, his family was practically run down by his Greenpeace involvement, a lot of people are suspicious of him or think he's a fool.

I learned a lot in The Ego's Nest and some outside later. I learned that his ego needs a nest. Now he's fathering a son one at Shawangau Lake, but he may fly to Paris, *dispar* not *dispar* or not, if the French go ahead with new tests. Above or below ground. You just can't tell.

During the drive I interviewed Metcalfe. I realized we laughed a lot. Gradually we laughed less. But there is a resilient grief in Ben Metcalfe that reminds me of Yeats' line, "Gusty transfiguring all that friend." He is not a tragic or a comic figure. But, like the Greenpeace organization will be, he exists unchangeable, flexible, creative and alive, Metcalfe's multiple personality reflects organic strength.

My own suspicion is that the quick-change artist will change less and less quickly. He is determined to write. His party makes me believe in the depth of his commitment to whatever cause he may engage in, and in his ability to seek the changes in his own personality, until all his beliefs, books and candles sing out. ■



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Thought she'd look good in something long and flowing so I dumped her into the Power.

at a dinner, Toronto was a tchold and remote. Most of the people were equally remote. But Manitowish we knew as Manitowish because a few of them worked with us, and there were loggers who still went back to harvest pine west.

Gradually I came to know commercial fishermen, trappers, game wardens, coal miners and stump pullers, and the Canadian image of calm self-deception renewed itself. The river became familiar places and the Pacific Coast forest was more Canadian than the Ontario woods, the beauty of the sea same to salmon, porcupine, porcupine, and trout and to the splashed white halibut ice-floes that passed northward with their asted down. Even Vancouver, with "Woodward's" welcoming hominess flanking over the harbor and the bright lights of Granville and Hastings promising urban adventure, had become familiar. All together, it was less than Canada, no doubt; but it was the Canada I knew, and I loved it.

A year of exile in London, not altogether of my own choosing, taught me homesickness. It was by no means a full time as I searched for an existence living with newspapers and magazines, scribbled through love affairs, published my first book and wrote a good part of the second one. But the river was tame and dry, there were no mountains, not even a rock bluff, there were no music and people twinkle with twinkle like cutting the tide-splashed water. The people were not in their wigs and their places, exchanging, and I, though native-born, was a stranger.

I think I knew then that I was Canadian, that I might go elsewhere but my heart would settle for nowhere else. There was nothing I wanted to write of

except Canada, the part of Canada I knew, and nothing that I wanted to know so much more of I could not bear not to be a part of it. Most of all, I wanted to be with people who knew what I was talking about and to feed at one with all these I met and dealt with something I had experienced in Canada and nowhere else.

Early's dream, perhaps, to some extent now associated to tranquility. But I have checked them against my native days of the time and found that all the claims were fully realized. I returned directly to my old concerns, freshwater and salt, canoe and gashouse, woods and wildlife, lops and head tools. Within a month I had twice almost drowned myself and life was real again, normal of London.

In one sense it was a different Canada. I had returned to The Depression had started, jobs were hard to get and paid only enough to cover food and rent. I was left with the headsets, setting out traps (for paper held up well), tilling for salmon, even going outside to observe and listen. Upstream people were fortunate, the Depression hit hard, but the beauty of the land was still with them and they were in large degree equipped to live off the land.

Canada expanded again for me when I moved south to central Vancouver Island and found myself among children of the first settlers, even some of the first settlers themselves. This is living history and should be a part of the consciousness of every Canadian. One felt a short in it, because the business of the first settlers was, and still is, awkward business. Their stick is a country to be muddled, gauded, shopped, bought, never

to the heart's desire. And through the early settlers the way into the country's still earlier history, the lines of exploration, travel, trade and war, were spread and brought to life.

A single man in a flood of uncertainty, marriage is a form of commitment, the birth of children a still error. My wife, Ann, was American born, American raised and educated, of a Canadian mother. Her adoption of Canada progressed at first as rapidly as my own and we knew from the start that we wanted our children to be Canadian. At that time, marriage between Canadians and Americans was probably more usual than they are today, especially in the Maritime and the Pacific Northwest. The border was of no importance and nearly everyone had close relations and acquaintances on both sides. Identity was not lessened by that; it was in itself a special identity, another aspect of Canadianism. If we have grown away from it, I believe it is less rather than gone.

Perhaps a Canadian's Canada should not be a continuously expanding idea, only at some stage one accepts, adopts, believes in and becomes. In a sense this may be so. But even physically, apart from its physical density of people, Canada is a huge entity, and for many of us, native-born as well as immigrant, World War II was our first full appreciation of this immensity and diversity. We were whisked from one end of the country to the other at the whim of military authorities. We were mixed and mingled and understood each other — from the Coast, the Maritimes, Ontario, Quebec and the Prairies mingled together, full brothers, Canadians, no longer provincials. It was a proud feeling, not simply because we wore the country's uniform but because we understood each other, trusted each other and felt we were together. We were mixed and shuffled and changed in training camps and overseas camps and reinforcement units, producing our personal loyalties at every stage but knowing full well how little they meant in the larger loyalty.

My own experience was circled and deepened by several another summer as taken in the RCMP. In the course of that I spent time in every province, as the Yukon and the Northwest Territories. I saw almost the St. Roch shortly before the start for the Northwest Passage, visited the Chugach Indians people in the north and the Road Island Indians in the north, caught Atlantic salmon in Nova Scotia and Arctic geology by St. John's on the Coppermine. I learned the workings of prime detachments and the people they served, learned the dance of Fredericton, watched that they of Fredericton, understood that the ways of the Maritimes are not always

the ways of British Columbia, even though both are Canadian. Through the RCMP, the bush and the prairie, I learned one main side of the history of Canada and glimpsed something of the sources of power in Ottawa.

Then, then, became my Canada as I learned. I have reinforced it and filled it further details in the past 25 years and no doubt shall continue to do so. Canada has left me free to make a life and has provided most of the material for that life. There have been disappointments and disappointments in it and things that achieved little or nothing, but these being in every life. I have been challenged constantly to learn and try to understand a new, new world and I have shared that land with many people also trying to find their way in it, trying to shape it into something for themselves and for others. It was a great experience, it still goes on and it will go on.

In Canada my children are free to make their lives as they would be nowhere else — less free perhaps than I was, because there are now more people, more free because there are more ways. They will not become wealthy and I would not wish that for them any more than I have wished it for myself. But they have learned, in the public schools and public universities of the country, how to serve. They have found opportunities for service and they will eventually make or find others. If the world in which they serve is not a secure one, I question that this is new, though the degree of insecurity may be. In Canada they are so well placed to anywhere to work for greater security for themselves and for all concerned.

I love the yield of the Canadian land and water, forest and grass and grain and cattle, fish and wild creatures. It is in this land and with that that the people of Canada, directly or indirectly, have their living. It is in searching out the land, learning to live in it, learning to use it, that we have been shaped and nurtured. We have made many mistakes, some wilful, some forced, in approach, and we have not always shaped ourselves well. But I know the best of our intentions, hopes and dreams, and I know the soul of Canada, the striving for unity and justice that exists in some degree in all of us. I believe in the essential quality of the people of Canada, as I believe in myself and my children, and I wish on all a land fit to live in as long as we are prepared to keep it and build it that way for the mix of others as well as ourselves.

If this stands like a hymn of love to the land that has made our lives and the people we have lived among, it is usually that, from my wife Ann and myself — two immigrants of 40 or 50 years ago who escaped each, found each and know there is still much more to find. ■

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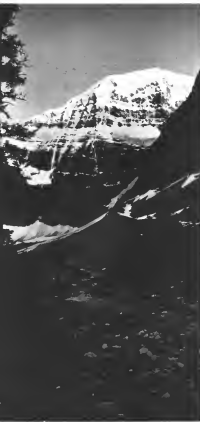
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# Settling into Invermere, BC

BY DALE ZIEROTH

A country big enough for a  
lifetime of changes

When I was 18, I left my parents' farm in northern Minnesota and went to university in Winnipeg. I didn't know it at the time, but that was the beginning of a long period of transition. I moved from one place to another. But in that, city to city — 14 places in eight years. Things that were beloved to me, and were treasured, have been left behind in a dozen places between Toronto and Winnipeg, between Winnipeg and where I'm living now, Invermere, a small village in British Columbia near the headwaters of the Columbia River.

Marge and I arrived here two years ago on another of our trans-Canada trips, this one out of Toronto and bound for Vancouver. We had no intention of staying. We hadn't packed any of our things other than the usual trinkets: a change of clothes, a few valued books, and a kind of impossible eagerness to experience everything we saw. We came at night, and even now our impressions are still clear. This country, with the mountains on each side of the road, with the occasional sign warning of falling rock, this was some kind of frontier. The people would be different here. In touch with some of the mystery.

We went down a hill and the light that shone on Lake Windermere gave us the impression of something big and vaguely new. Something previously unthought, and far away from the direct shot of snow and ash. We told our

PHOTOGRAPH BY BOB HALLIDAY

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where there it would be worthwhile trying to live here. We said we were ready for this kind of place, where we could rent and start doing without the outside world making it any more difficult. We knew we couldn't live in Toronto anymore — the almost daily barrage of problems, gas, unemployment, it was all too much — and we accepted Vancouver would be similar. We would simply drop out here, disappear somewhere between Toronto and Vancouver. It was feasible that this might be a place where we could get down some roots. We dreamt of permanence.

Marge found a job at the local newspaper, *The Westshore Valley Echo*, and we found a nice place to stay. A flat over a store, but out with a gorgeous view. The village seemed to live and let live. No car particularly needed as at first, most of them just assumed we were part of the annual tourist crop. We couldn't believe our luck. We were far enough off the main highway not to be overwhelmed by tourists and yet close enough to get back to whatever we thought we'd left behind. The shopkeepers were friendly and eager to help design the flat that they had a monopoly on the market anyway. We took trips along the tide roads on the weekends. Around each corner was a view we had never seen before.

I was already after Christmas when Don arrived, a friend from Toronto. We picked him up in Golden and drove the

80 miles home on a treacherous highway with patches of black ice that could spin us into the valley. It was eerily eerie by the time we crept outside our place, the sky over the mountains breaking into little bits of cloud.

Don stayed himself here at first, so much so that he joked about never going back. But slowly he became restless. There was a gap between Invermere and Toronto he couldn't bridge. He couldn't adjust to our habit of going to bed at ten and getting up at six. The movies in the town didn't change often enough for him. He was bored and began talking about Vancouver. Don and I had once lived in the same world together, in Toronto, and I knew some of the same things that he knew. But now he couldn't quite discover me. He was eager to become acquainted with people again, lots of them. When Don left, he was glad he had come; he was also glad to be leaving back to the real world, at least, not half joking.

For most Canadians, life is the real world. Real is the sense that it's boring and active and full of the possibilities for constant change (good or bad), possibilities for making other people like oneself, possibilities for excitement and a certain kind of fulfillment. Don missed those things here. I was sure they were here, but that they were disguised somehow and not willing to reveal themselves until you'd been here long enough. It was almost as if he didn't see

far enough, didn't see beyond the kind of pretence that exists in all small places like this. When Don left, I was still convinced that there were people here, somewhere, who were living out their lives in a beautiful and compassionate way, without entering into the frenzy here and without the need to do so. There had to be. If it couldn't be done here, I told myself, it couldn't be done anywhere.

But it didn't take long before I realized that Don's visit, his restlessness, had touched off a lie in myself. The village seemed more and more interesting, I was getting freer and I couldn't afford to admit that openly — there was too much at stake, too large an investment in time. His visit made me aware of the vast difference between here and out there. More and more, Marge and I discovered there were very few people in Invermere with whom we had anything in common at all. As much as we wanted to be alone, we did not want to be ostracized or isolated. I felt that I needed to see people almost every day, not what I talked to anyone who would listen. The few friends we had made told us what we didn't want to know, that Invermere was a difficult place to live, especially for young people who were accustomed to an urban type of environment.

"When I first arrived here," one woman told us, "I was amazed that people didn't look at my best side. I was a city girl then and all they thought I was a city girl just because I couldn't make a proper fire and cut wood." Another woman who has lived in Invermere for seven years said "I'm still one of the newcomers."

Invermere is Shogren's begins to fade. We talked of moving, but where would we go? The long winter made time stand still. We began to see the village through new eyes — its shortcomings were easy to find. The whole village was concerned with pollution, undoubtedly because more and more of that message had filtered up from the rest of Canada, but they still kept dumping plastics and garbage at the dump. At one point there seemed to be a drug problem among the young people and the village council limited rock dances to one a month as a largely insufficient effort to control the influx of dope. Invermere is in some ways unique among small villages I have seen. It includes the very poor and the very rich. And if you start out poor, you are still regarded as poor no matter how rich you become. Every family who has some kind of social standing to uphold has at least one place of an Indian (usually a beanie-eyed child) in their living room, but does nothing about the problems of the spotted Shewang and Kootenay.

We began to feel the failure of the village — or rather my own failure to be realistic

enough to know that where you live is no guarantee for the way you live — we stayed Invermere, dropped the Indians, there were never big issues here. They were more a kind of sport, something interesting to talk about with your neighbours, catastrophic enough to be lively but not vital enough to move the majority of people. Canadian nationalism, by the way, seems less important here, perhaps because the people are more concerned with solidifying the corner of the country first, as if it might revert back to the wilderness one night while everyone is sleeping.

So we stayed, knowing we could never live in a big city again, and hoping things would improve. We had learned one thing for certain, a thousand people here were not much different from a thousand people in Toronto. And if there were two million people in this valley, it would not be much different from Toronto, and perhaps even worse. We had to fit into one of two camps, the citizens who were concerned about streets and sewage and where they hung on the social ladder, or else the back-to-the-land yuppies and white rat people. We were neither, though maybe a little of both.

It was spring before we realized that Invermere was really two separate places for us. First, a village where we lived and worked and were concerned with a decent lifestyle that was somehow underdeveloping as we had expected, and, second, a jam-packed place for hanging away from just that, and getting away quickly into the mountains. We had driven around them the previous summer and that winter. We traveled the back roads where the nearest depot of sorts, toward the Lake of the Haquay Glacier or onto the Pacific Valley. At high altitudes, the roads turned into trails wandering over roots and rocks. Sometimes, even in July, we could scratch away the pine needles and find ice underneath. Finally even those trails would disappear. Amblanchon had slid down and smothered them, laying down trees as thick as telephone poles as if they were little props of string. From Ron, the man who designs the newspaper where Marge works, we learned about the old pioneers of the area, the Harry Blount and Bert Schofield, economic empires who spent their winters alone, strange old men who made the mountains alive with mystery.

Breaths of our lives further up the valley, toward Golden. Sometimes they go as long as three months without visitors. It takes almost an hour to get there because they practically live on top of a mountain. They came north from the United States five years ago and found a land where they could find their own kind of life. Sometimes I'd like to live that way (the opportunity is there, and

continues on page 86



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## BC PERKUSION: A STORY

and Paper Workers of Canada, an independent union. "The Sonnets were able to get away with 20 years of anti-labor legislation. The BC Federation of Labor should be proud of themselves—they didn't do a damn thing—the bastards!"

Many workers in Canada have decided that the route to better wages and working conditions lies in the creation of independent Canadian unions. That movement is extremely strong in BC. Last October the Canadian Aluminum Smelter and Allied Workers Union scored a major victory by replacing the giant United Steelworkers at the Alcan plant in Kitimat (B.C.). In March the Canadian Workers Union was unable to win the Steelworkers at Comco's Trail plant.

ACTED didn't like the Kitimat march. Mullin: "If you're not on the march, you're not on the march."

Left or right, independent or unionized, BC unions are making it. In 1972, more than two million Canadians were in BC through strikes and lockouts. But industry is not necessarily radicalized. BC unions often target anti-union legislation on free employment and employment of Chinese and Japanese. And radicals are often paged from the mainstream BC unions.

Horner Stevens, a Communist and president of the United Federation and Allied Workers Union. "There's been a slowdown in the labor movement here, as well as everywhere else, to look at things on a part-time basis, to go for the pay packet and ignore the political implications—the real nature of a worker's relationship to his job."



Economist Martin Robin: "There's been a spirit of adventure to attract people here, but BC is a province where most people lead hard lives drawing hard-earned wages. Most people are hard-earned and many workers still live in company towns with atrociously regulated conditions."

But in BC work is not to be analyzed work is to be done. On the frontier, activity counts. There's no pleasure or pain in the process, only in what the process is for results.

Paul St. Pierre: "There's a kind of foolishness about work: a fast and furious lifestyle common to loggers and trappers as well as Indians: you work like hell day and night until you get a smoke, and then you stop."

Well, if the frontier is softening, if Berners is creeping up the Fraser River, what then?

Dave Barrett is a frontiersman, but not the same kind of frontiersman as C. Barrett was. Barrett was chosen by the frontier to tame it, to cut it down to size. Barrett was chosen to tame it. There will be more social legislation, less noise, a softer life for some, a more thriving life for others. Barrett will tame some of the frontiers because the frontiers are running out.

The frontiers will remain their ranges of the golf courses and the mountains, and those ranges will be so irrelevant as they were before. They will tame the truth about the province, just as they did before. The frontier will continue to discover itself, as it has been doing for more than a century. People will still come to British Columbia looking for something, for themselves, for a life in Elysium. And that's what is here. ■



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## TELEVISION

BY HEATHER ROBERTSON



Heather Robertson

### Give Us Back Our Airwaves

One of the great Canadian myths, the bedrock of our first popular culture, is the belief that broadcasting belongs to the people. For that reason we have in addition to the CBC several broadcast networks whose job it is to maintain popular content over Canadian radio and television through a system of licences and regulations. Yet for 20 years broadcasting licences have been granted almost exclusively to corporations whose main interest in television is making money. Now an alternative is being put forward to place Canadian television directly in the hands of the people.

Television co-ops have applied to the Canadian Radio-Television Commission for licences to operate non-profit TV stations in both Ottawa and Winnipeg. The Ottawa co-op, Coopération de Télévision de l'Ontario, wants a French-language station. Communications Winnipeg Co-op intends to broadcast in English. It's all about the changing mix, since 70 per cent of the founding committee members now applying to the CRTC for a licence.

Like any business or consumer co-op, a TV co-op is competitive and professional. Finally, however, are ploughed back into the station's programs or dividends to the members as dividends (membership, at a nominal fee, is open to everyone). Policy and program decisions are made by a board of directors elected from the membership; each member gets one vote. Policies which do not meet the majority vote can be thrown out at the annual meeting. A television co-operative is owned and controlled by the people who watch. This democratic principle overcomes the problem of state bureaucracy which has plagued the CBC and also its alleged role in private television where programs are purely an excuse to sell products, while advertising is necessary in a co-op to pay for the program, it can be kept to a minimum since the purpose of a co-op is not to make money, but to provide programs to meet the needs and interests of the community. A co-op allows the people a greater opportunity to participate in performing and production.

The concept of co-op TV is simple, but sharing a vision on a incredibly complicated and expensive. You can organize a co-op in Manitoba for \$18.75, it costs at least \$400,000 to set up a TV station (a small one) and another \$700,000 to run it for a year. Without any major resources, a co-op can raise this money from the sale of memberships, loans from public agencies and advertising. A co-op's only asset is its licence. Once you have a TV licence the world will beat a path to your door, but getting that licence involves participating in and increasing a ritual of bureaucratic complexity.

The application form is 31 pages long, eight-and-one-half pages deal with money. Accompanied to negotiating with corporations, the CRTC is understandably interested in the cost of their money and the purity of their intentions. In addition, the Department of Communications demands a detailed technical brief prepared by a consulting engineer for whose services the going price is \$10,000. It also helps to have an accountant, a good lawyer and a lobbyist in Ottawa. Most large corporations will invest \$100,000 and a year of their executives' time in a bid for a TV licence, a co-op has to do all this for free. The first co-op fair was held in 1980 when the CRTC had to develop a whole new set of assumptions.

Stimulus to form the TV co-ops came when the CRTC last year solicited applications for new stations across Canada, resulting in the availability of the privately financed Global network in Ontario. This year several corporations have applied for licences in Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver with the intention of making Global Canada's third national network. This country already has plenty of private channels offering penny-dreadful local programs and American "cable" ones near the border are glutted with American shows.

**THIS MONTH'S SHOWS**  
Watch: Last moments on the French chair (no). Plenty of risk. Language doesn't matter. Watch for: First Person Singular — 13 years on air, at 10:30 p.m. (CIBC-Milieu) (no. May 27 at 10 p.m.)  
Reviews: Return

Heather Robertson is a Winnipeg writer and broadcaster.

beamed across. What can Global possibly offer their viewers?

American border states are making a killing broadcasting Canadian commercials to Canadian viewers. Since the government refuses to stop this through legislation, the CRTC is encouraging Canadian TV stations to fight for the advertising dollar and force the Yankee pirates back to the advertisers of their own country. By establishing new TV stations, across the prairies, the CRTC hopes to build a Majestic Lane of the new, the newness is the same as that which built the CPR. The more is money, not programs — the stations that win this kind of warfare are those with the most dollars and the worst shows. Although the CRTC has good intentions, there are those of us who wonder whether it's better to be raped by a Canadian than pillaged by a Yankee. Opposition has already been voiced by the Association for Public Broadcasting in British Columbia which intends to file an intervention with the CRTC to prevent the licensing of another private channel in Vancouver on the grounds that it is not in the public interest. Its criticism will be heard, along with the applications, at public hearings scheduled for sometime this summer.

The only legitimate reason for any new TV station is to improve programming. TV co-ops have a strong case since only they offer a genuine alternative. Co-op TV grows out of an urgent need for solutions which reflect the local community for programs which are not only about local people but which are produced from their point of view. It is a plea for television which is based on reality, the blood and guts of life, an attempt to keep it in a particular place and time. Like a daily newspaper it is one-op believes that television which is interesting, informative and useful will attract an audience much larger than nothing people like to watch more than themselves. A co-op guarantees public expression and has the possibility of breaking through the cynicism and banality of commercial television with programs that are both honest and entertaining. Co-op TV is a mission of the heart, private of the mass media, the public's right to know and to be heard and the possibilities of genuinely popular television have scarcely been imagined.

Taking into account the obvious difficulties and uncertainties of co-op broadcasting the CRTC has gone out of its way to accommodate the co-op applications. It should go further because the co-ops represent TV that is both publicly owned and potentially superior. If the CRTC has strong obligations to give them, at least a professional license to prove they can work. ■



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BY JOHN HOFFESS



Louise Portal

## Making It Big By Being Truly Awful

lots of people are angrily shrieking, or, one suspects, underhandedly sneering, at the village idiot in his late twenties whose mother and sister (played well by Monique Lapine and Louise Portal) are prostitutes reviled by the townfolk who grade themselves as connoisseurs and aesthetes. At one point, knowing that her son is watching her in a state of post-up pleasure, Taneau's mother does a long, lecherous airplane, and lays down on a bed below his bedroom perchole, fondling her breasts and thighs. It's that sort of *Apocalypse in a Gusher Eye* scenario that convinced this film an erotic arthouse that has yet to make a good movie. Pushing things farther, Taneau (we are told) is certainly wouldn't occur to anyone watching the film is a sexual legend in this apocalyptic outlandish, and when it is learned that the local schoolteacher (Michelle Mogen) is regularly receiving Taneau's sad services in a barn, the town's entire population turns out, including a provincial police officer who threatens the couple with a gun, and a priest who

**RECOMMENDED THIS MONTH**  
KAMOURASKA: Claude Jutra's new film starring Genevieve Bujold. GRIES AND ANISPEY'S: Ingrid Bergman's haunting, galling study of four women. GLENNY: Lorraine Oliver's Macmillan/Casablanca is witty and serious. DEATH OF A LAMB: AFFRACK: Giles Carter's latest, a Canadian official only at the Cannes Film Festival. THIS IS CANADIAN: The under-screen thriller is back again. TOM SOK: RPT: The musical version for children.

John Hoffess is a Canadian film director and critic.

denotes them with excommunication, bringing the film to a predictable dramatic climax. The girl leaves the boy Taneau hang himself and life goes on Offroad. I can't recall a single laugh with *Taneau* personae.

Casualty Gods is set in the fictional town of Farshawville, Ontario, where three lovelorn love men to their death chop up their bodies and serve them for dinner. It borrows heavily from the low-budget horror classic *Night of the Living Dead* and comes with a bonus on the soundtrack to warn patrons with weak stomachs to close their eyes during scenes of "especially crude or gruesome nature." Rushing for the highest superlative which is the film's due, it is, or competes. The film's director, an actor, Andrea Muray, who is a real discovery, and who alone gives the film some class. The film is being distributed in the U.S. by American International Pictures, famous for the steady stream of beach bunnies, musicals, melodramas and horror flicks of a few years back. An AIP executive was once quoted as saying, "a description of his company's policy, 'first you get a title, then you design a trailer and advertising campaign, and then, if it looks good, you go and make the picture'." Well, *Casualty Gods*' trailer is better than the film as a whole, so it ought to warn them on the drive-in circuit where the film shows in only one third of the reason for going. One can't really blame Canadian filmmakers for trying such gimmicks: it's the public that has made them desperate. A film industry survives as best it can, any way it can, and right now film like *Taneau*, *Casualty Gods* and *Pinnacle* (in print) and possibly print in message pictures and strip joints in Toronto, showing all that the Board of Censors allows which isn't worth talking about) are what one segment of the Canadian film industry is making an in-secure survival. All of these films would outrage a feminist, they're just *Playboy* come films in a woman with a few lustre scenes for plot. If the bad drives out the good in Canadian films it will be *Playboy* themselves who close the path to follow.

Brother Sam, Sister Mary. Given the age of most people attending movies this silly, yuletide corruption of the story of Forest of Arden, with songs by Deevien, may prove to be as bludge as the young as *East River* was with the generic art. Not even the camp acceptance of *For A Few Dollars More*, however, will redeem it in the eyes of anyone the least bit discerning about films. Franco Zerbini's lead production, *Romeo And Juliet* may prove to be the high point of his career. Here where he must the dialogue himself, he suggests that Kahlil Gibran is his favorite poet. The entire film is an abridgement of time.

# The Queen's Plate

Saturday, June 30  
in the presence of HRH  
You know who!..



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It used to be said that when Canadian films are good enough the people would turn out to see them.  
Which wasn't an accurate description of the problem. It's making films that creep that people will turn out to see them that is truly. Films that are bad in a fashionably contemptuous way.  
Gerald Perron's *The Rainbow Boys* (five performances, weak script) wasn't out but better or worse than many U.S. and British imports that have done well in Canada. But the public generally didn't subtitle the film. They didn't like it. They didn't even try it out. As a result based on the disappointing returns in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver the film has disappeared. The American *Four* becomes another Canadian loser.  
Each time a decent-minded film fails, it causes increased pressure among filmmakers to lower their goals still further in the pursuit of public success. (Clément Perron's *Taneau* and Jean Benoit's *Casualty Gods* are no attempts to make popular Canadian movies or, if you prefer, to find the common denominator among Canadian filmgoers. Female breasts exposed frequently in the slightest provocation are all that either film has to offer for the record. *Taneau* has the biggest breasts while *Casualty Gods* has the edge in quantity) offering little that a movie can seek his teeth into. *Taneau* is certainly a slice-of-life, Quebecois melodrama, *Casualty Gods* is a bourgeois horror film. Despite these differences they share a god-awful lack of taste.  
I sympathize with these films but do not like them, they are too desperate for success and it shows. Instead of trying something original and different and possibly risking failure, they play it easy, ploddingly following a formula that is supposed to pay off, but which brings no creative and derivative this more of the excitement a young audience should rightfully expect from movies.  
Clément Perron who wrote the screenplay for *Not Quite Anorex* has written and directed *Taneau* in a confined manner of style. He shows all that he has learned from Claude Jutra, and Jean-Claude Labrecque in *Les Sentiers*, but the film lacks a clear sensibility and vigour. The story is pointless and meandering, the film has no reason to exist. Unlike *Casualty Gods*, which can be said to be a passable even if the entertainment and which has the good sense not to take itself seriously, *Taneau* is a pointless farce into the Quebec Gods' imagination that is better handled by novellas Marie-Claire Blais and Anne Hébert.  
*Taneau* is set in backwoods Quebec as was *Man of the Atlantic*, but here the mood is black and bitter and the pace

## RADIO

Cool sophisticated men's got you any-where as a public figure in the 1980s — you've got to be a man of the people. You've got to have "dang us your boys" — knock Calcuttans prefer real people as leaders and folk heroes — people like that latter-day George F. Boulton, former Premier of B.C., a C. B. name, or that political hunchman Tom "Ternie" Campbell former mayor of Vancouver, or that short-sleeved socialist and irrepressible clown prince Premier Dave Barrett — far more on the clean-cut jawed-jawed products of upper middle class Canada.

No, you've got to be just plain people. And that's a big part of the secret of the success of Canada's hottest and richest (\$100,000-plus a year) radio host-liner Jack Webster. "Supermouth" is a name call to him. Each weekday morning night-night to noon on Vancouver radio station CJOR, Webster can be heard (his weekly 90-minute slot is irreplaceable) haranguing, probing and commiserating with people and editors on topics ranging from the federal government's failure to provide families to the welfare abuse and drug problems of Grouse, Vancouver's recently redveloped old city centre. Webster prefers a hard-hitting "no-bell" format, something the listeners enjoy, especially when mixing VHS tapes.

Publicist have a gut-dealer for him, sometimes feel contemptuous toward him, and sometimes just him down as a redneck. But Webster has a strong following among ordinary people. They pack his radio den and he is always, despite his argument with differing questioners ("Make your point old boy"), and despite his infuriating lapses into contempt of infidelity. They stick with him because he reflects their concerns — and he has the no-nonsense questions they were asked.

"All the politicians, all the army/air/sea people — they all disagree with me," Webster says with satisfaction. "The only people who are with me are the anti-drug police men."

Webster breaks bread, literally with the working class. His father was a shipyard engineer. And at 14, Webster left the stevedores of Glasgow to work for a newspaper.

Like any host-liner, Webster indulges in occasional rants, on occasion, when he has a bottle in a pink West Vancouver suburb and a 94-year sheep farm on St. John's Island. But these lapses haven't completely dented his social inventory. On the air Webster helps people fight bureaucracy. On the air he's been known to lead a more personal helping hand (and occasionally he's even come up with a few dollars).

"We're public figures," he says, giving a description of his role. "We're a

## BY CLIVE COOKING



Jack Webster

## Running Off At The Supermouth

public welfare call, a public listening post, w/e've — I mean all open-liners — a veritable mass of information."

Webster attended the local media world a year ago when, after 14 years, he jumped from his \$70,000-plus spot with KKNW as the city's top-drawing morning open-liner to sign with fourth-rank CJOR for a two year \$100,000-a-year contract with options for a third year. The move dropped Webster's audience ratings down to second behind his KKNW replacement, Ed Murphy, but it lifted CJOR up to the second largest as it decreased overall CJOR's audience as an station, what Webster will help the station ultimately overcome KKNW.

As a counterpart to the den Webster was offered a bright new studio in Grouse, Webster, who's 35, beefy and greying at the temples, holds court there now surrounded by a growing collection of personal cars — three brass apocryphal, a granddaddy, a gold, a silver, a dark wood one owned by Malcolm Lowry.

Guests of Webster find it amusing that he should now be operating in Grouse, the scene of an ugly riot in the summer of 1971 which they say was fomented by a series of anti-drug programs he aired. Webster denies this, arguing that the programs just revealed the seriousness of the problem (police called Grouse "the supermouth of drugs in Western Canada"). Webster says it was the panic of Mayor Tom Campbell, the Yippie-staged smoke-in and the "Alabama letter" of the police that caused the riot in any case. Webster does not appear

concerned with what his detractors say. He cites ample daily evidence in Grouse of a serious drug problem, and knows his listeners share his sympathy to the drug scene. "We've had more murder in Vancouver over drugs, and more drug overdose deaths than any other city in Canada. And if that isn't something to get a little bit short about, I'm dumb as I know what I'm."

Another scene which easily makes Webster become short at night and incoherence in Oppenheimer's For Youth and Local Arts and Project grants. One recent case combined the worst of both worlds for Webster. A confidential source who slipped under his door in April which alleged that a group of individuals who were apparently in line for a \$10,000 LIP grant to develop day camps recently were known criminals planning on using the money to deal in drugs. Webster placed a couple of calls to the night officials and stopped the grant fast.

Webster gets satisfaction not just from the money he makes but from the influence, the power he wields as a broadcaster with a strong following. Webster feels he's had a hand, for example, in the defeat of Social Credit in B.C. "Sure I took personal satisfaction in the Social Credit defeat because it tagged at them every body else, it was a sign of power." But that doesn't automatically make Premier Dave Barrett Webster's favourite boy. They have a good personal relationship, even speak the same casual language, but the B.C. Liberal Government's decision to drop Webster's name from the list of candidates for the 1985 election, regarding the use of land had Webster's opinion. "We were on air and called for an amendment to the act to allow people the right of appeal, to allow a provision of compensation for farmers who are left by not being able to sell, and to allow the local government's voice. The program brought a flurry of messages to Webster. He was called a traitor. He was shocked that people would expect partnership from him. So far, Webster's been a good boy. The NDP and Grouse has been fairly tame, it's an interesting bet he'd get on. "Right now their holes are still showing," he says. "But they may be pushing too far too fast."

Webster never loses his hope. "I'm the only person on the West Coast who has hammered Trudeau and will continue to hammer him until he realizes that they're not [basta] in the West on his program — that's garbage — not on the scandal about DITE, thank to the East. They were looking at me as a person who had the integrity, the competence of an investigator, Oppenheimer's For Youth and Local Initiatives Program and they're going to be better again on their issue because they haven't learned their bloody lessons on the West Coast." ■

Clive Cooking is author of the University of British Columbia's *Albion Chronicle*.

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BY PETER HAY



Christopher Newton

## A Conflict Of Dramatic Interest

It is too early to tell whether Newton could improve the low profile of the Playhouse. He is a complete man of the theatre, actor-director-writer. His most needed talent is for organization, and he started with an unconcerned enthusiasm in administrative budget and personnel. He is a self-assured traditionalist, in love with the classics. His major concerns structurally are to raise the level of acting at the Playhouse and to present a balanced season, less redundant, with comedies from London's West End. The Playhouse may improve if Christopher Newton can remain beyond the customary two years. And for that he may have to outmanoeuvre or change the board that hired him.

Because the Playhouse has virtually monopolized public and private funds available for professional theatre in the province in expansion is the present budget of around \$750,000 has been largely at the expense of alternative theatre groups. There are several talented directors who manage to assemble a few actors for an ad hoc production or a brief season. LIP and OFY grants have helped in the past, but this year they have been cut off and many directors who face a struggle to work in the mainstream of the Playhouse are on their own again.

The most outstanding of these losers in recent years has been John Julius. Through the theatre concept, he calls *Savage God*, he has made an impact on West Coast and Canadian theatre for disproportionate to the scanty resources available. Julius believes in free theatre

in every sense of the word: he produces plays in churches, universities, hotels, busboys parks, on galleries. Many actors work free for him. In 1970 he was given a modest research grant by the Canada Council to explore alternatives and to this end, during three weeks, he toured Vancouver with the amazing total of 50 varied productions.

Julius' bugs came to Vancouver and stayed. He directed *Capote* of *The Favourite Dramatist* after the Playhouse refused the rights. Next he worked with Indian concepts and then moved and directed a highly successful children's play. Another occasional worker is John Gray, whose company created memorable versions of *The Duchess* and of the Nijinsky legend. One of the most popular LIP projects last year was *Troque* in Vancouver's East End. Directed by Jon Bankston, it produced only local plays, a negation of the largely unexploited riches of West Coast drama. Dorothy Simon and Henschel Harlan are known for two outstanding plays, *Cadillac* and *Edwin Muir & Mrs. W. J. Apple*. And there are many others some of them better known in Toronto than they are in Vancouver. Can Robert Betty-Lambert, Jackie Crossland, John Kelly, Brian Sloan, John Lumsden.

Troque is back this year, and so is *Company One*, founded in Victoria by Carl Hartz, which leans the province with theatre prizes and dramatic material created by the actors. In the interior of the province, theatrical activity is largely the domain of enterprising, less professional. There are more than 20 amateur organizations throughout BC, some of which mount a full season of plays. The Powarhouse Theatre in Vernon gives high-quality performances. The Pacific Playhouse of Victoria, which has won several awards with original plays, runs among amateurs.

A characteristic manifestation of BC separatism is the fact that the BC Drama Association, which represents some 50 groups involved some years ago with the Dominion Drama Festival, now known as Theatre Canada.

Although the interior of the province lacks the population base to sustain professional theatre, there is no shortage of talented individuals who prefer to live there. An unusual example is Tom Kerr, whose *Western Youth Theatre* in Kamloops has toured England and the Edinburgh Festival. A friend and pupil of the late Sir Egonu Garbo, Kerr is a school supervisor, but feels like to direct every year at the Playhouse and as far away as Australia and Glasgow.

Only when the various funding agencies will start looking a greater variety of groups and individual theatre artists will it be worth betting on a healthy future for drama in BC.



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## CBC RADIO

CFRB 1340	Happy Valley	CFR 880	Halifax	CFM 940	Married	CFW 990	Armstrong	CFR 990	Vancouver
CFM 940	Calgary	CFM 910	Drum	CFW 1230	Edmonton	CFM 990	Calgary	CFM 1230	Edmonton
CFM 940	Calgary	CFM 910	Drum	CFW 1230	Edmonton	CFM 990	Calgary	CFM 1230	Edmonton
CFM 940	Calgary	CFM 910	Drum	CFW 1230	Edmonton	CFM 990	Calgary	CFM 1230	Edmonton
CFM 940	Calgary	CFM 910	Drum	CFW 1230	Edmonton	CFM 990	Calgary	CFM 1230	Edmonton

Peter Hay is drama editor for *Telegraph* and a free lance writer.

On a visit he paid to the West Coast recently, Adam Turner, the new director of the Canada Council remarked: "There are problems with many regional theatres elsewhere in the country, but nowhere is there such a chasm between establishment and non-establishment theatres as in Vancouver."

The establishment is the Playhouse Theatre Company, which has just completed its sixth season, and is showing symptoms of progress: steadily found occasionally in children. It has gone through five artistic directors and its backstage intrigues are reminiscent of the last years of the Roman Empire.

Political controversy has brought little luck to the largest regional theatre west of Winnipeg. Five seasons ago more than 10,000 subscribers went to see a play in the 400-seat Queen Elizabeth Playhouse, which the company rents at a high cost from the city of Vancouver. The theatre developed a national reputation with select productions of local playwrights such as Eric Taylor, George Ryga. There was a daring studio program for experimental before smaller audiences. Stage 2. Finally the company took over and merged with Holiday Theatre, an older children's theatre and school without the province.

Constant shifts in leadership, several bankruptcies in early 1970, a protracted piece controversy in 1971 over the shelving of George Ryga's controversial play *Capote* of *The Favourite Dramatist* and a report by the *Crus* that, despite a crisis, have all contributed to the altered situation today. Season ticket subscriptions have hovered around the \$600 mark. Stage 2 has been sold, even though the main operation cost less than a quarter of the stage production. Children's plays have been cut back, and the school room have been bringing in less and less revenue.

The company has lost its knack for creating an exciting environment for indigenous drama. Its programming of music and mostly foreign plays is becoming indistinguishable from that of the privately operated Arts Club, an intimate theatre with fewer than 100 seats. The *Fredens*, *Wood Theatre*, run by the theatre department of the University of British Columbia, with professional talent and to sell-out subscriptions often reach the Playhouse's performance, especially in the classics.

But there is a new wind blowing through the Playhouse. The volatile and unprovoked mantle of artistic director has been inherited by Christopher Newton, who founded *Troque* Calgary and now is about two years ago. He succeeds Foster Whitbread, who has created Vancouver a bit like a water ripple from the summer film Festival.

BY GEORGE WOODCOCK



David Robinson

## Getting Away From Us All

London post, in again the solitary centre.

Turn to drama: the same holds good. A very high proportion of the good new Canadian plays are being written in BC, and produced and played on the Pacific Coast but, except for Eric Newell (*Prize Of Sand* is his most recent and successful play), the dramatists have been in a minority. From the prizes: George Ryga (whose *Johnny Of The Zoo* has sold 5,000 copies in Talonbooks' local edition), Beverly Sorenson (her *Coolidge* up to 3,500 copies with the same publisher), Hilda Hurd (whose *Elmer Abner & Her Wife, Aphrodite*, is about to appear).

What I find extraordinary — is what is at first sight a very expensive literary scene — is the extent to which most of these writers from outside have not only lived their way deep into the peculiar Coast existence but have also given it a really true expression. If I want indeed to push a hard bit of books that best convey the feel and body of life in British Columbia I would inevitably find myself including Edith Wilson's *Love And Self*, where Malcolm Lowry's recent posthumous novel, *Under The Volcano*, and Douglas Hay Brown's *The Manner Of The Year*, Barry's *Turkey* and together of course with *The Double Book*, some of the yet-unpublished fiction which Audrey Thomas is writing out of her life in the Gulf Islands. Those with a good knowledge of local scene like C. Newman's *A Russian Novel*, John Mills' *The Land Of It*, and Robert Harlow's *Stones*. But of these five Harlow who looks as though he may yet take up Sheila Wilson's task of giving the province a mythical dimension beyond the

at its best, but also a first introduction to the distinctive sensibility of the Pacific Coast: the writer's complex responses to an extraordinary environment.

The BC literary life tends also to be suspicious in nature, rooted in particular cultural settings and not open to the rigid kind of worlded politeness and mass media one finds in the large centres. There are no real trade publishers on the Coast. Instead there is a system of beloved small presses like Talonbooks (David Robinson) and Newsworld Press (Bill Bennett) in Vancouver and Sono Nis (J. Michael Yates) in the remote Quanaa Claxton Island. I identify the process with their bookishness, but most of them are cooperatively run, as is much of the other more figurative publishing going on in the province, the most handsome of it produced by the master printer of Vancouver, Charles Martin, and the rest by a variety of presses varying from Bill Bennett's smugly Greater to Talonbooks' splendid dingy and staggeringly presswork which Goodwin Packer provides.

All that means that much small publishing is going on, but for a little press like Sono Nis to produce a book novel like Robert Harlow's *Stones* is rare indeed. The University of British Columbia Press brings out some critical books, Grey Press on Vancouver Island has taken a lead in publishing local history, while the slight cost of printing plays has allowed the Talonbooks press to flourish. There are also some solidly established literary journals (*Canadian Literature*, *Prism*, *Intercontinental*), *West Coast Review*, *Melancholic Review* and *Canadian Fiction Magazine*. But most prose writers still find they must continue to find publishers for their books in Toronto or further afield.

I would say British Columbia is a good place for a writer if he knows what he wants to do and can do it without the support of a literary setting.

But what about the ambitious young? There is nothing much for them here to fill the intermediate time between being an aspirant in little magazines and establishing themselves as writers, and perhaps that is why the people who write well from the Coast are mainly migrants from over the mountains who have chosen to get away from big-time society. The talented and ambitious young British Columbians also migrate, in the other direction. Sometimes they come back, more often not. But a writer's place is not where he was born: it is where he works, and that is why a Pacific literary sensibility, which began to come to being when Edith Wilson published her first novels about the Coast, is often a complicated mixture of alienating the experience of the region through strange and southerly eyes. ■

# Peter and Paul and Bloody Mary.

As far as the Russians are concerned, tomato juice is for breakfast, not for vodka. Vodka, they told us, was meant to be taken straight. Sometimes with a plate of tangier meats, or some hot tea as a chaser. But apart with tomato juice.

That was before we took Alberta Vodka to Lefsegrad and poured a few Bloody Marys. Then our Russian friends had to admit we were onto a great idea. (Or?) They tried it a number of ways. Mixed and straight. And Alberta Vodka met with smiles of approval in a country famous for its own.

Canadians approve of Alberta Vodka's quality, too. That's why it's now Canada's best-seller at the popular price.

## Alberta Pure Vodka

It takes more than a Russian's scolding name to make a great Vodka.



In the background is the Peter and Paul fortress, the first building in Lefsegrad that Czar Peter the Great created in 1703. Home to Peter and Paul Cathedral, the burial place of the Czar.

George Woodcock is a Canadian writer and journalist.

Every fall the witness flight of snow geese comes winging down the coast of British Columbia and settles in the marshes of the Fraser River Delta near the George C. Reifel Waterfowl Refuge: in spring the great flock takes off for the Arctic, but every year a few more get behind to end up the end of the predictable weather line over and under the Fraser River.

Winter one encounters in British Columbia used to be rather like this, our guests with varying habits. Returning the snow geese pattern, they find their way in spring to the Coast. In the fall, the wandering winter has reached, all except the few more each year who stay behind to enjoy the Pacific amenities, one of the chief of which is certainly the opportunity to stand with parrots, peacocks, herons, various biologists, Donkeybush, Sikis, Chrome, and other something human kind, and largely avoid the much less interesting company of other writers.

Literary life in British Columbia is largely dominated by people who are not native British Columbians. Compared with the writers' worlds of London, New York, or even Toronto, it is pretty realistically central.

I suspect writers may be different most of all, but with novelists and other prose writers the preoccupation of migrants among the really good writers has been striking.

When I first arrived at the end of the Forties, who were the novelists by which the province was most known outside its borders? Expatriates, all of them. Edith Wilson, born in South Africa and English educated, Malcolm Lowry and Rodrick Hay Brown both born in England. Turner appeared shortly afterwards, with an authentic British Columbia base here, and then one realized that even Erle Stanley Gardner came from over the Great Divide. And Margaret Laurence. It was not until Sheila Wilson published in 1958 her marvelous fantasy of the British Columbia drylands, *The Double Book*, that one recognized a local-born prose writer of the first order. And Sheila Wilson has gone away, and not yet published another novel.

The BC literary scene of 1973 is a new situation. The best British Columbia novels to come off the press in the last year or so are *Mr. Abner* by Audrey Thomas, a shattering neo-psychological treatment; Anne Murray's *Love Of Gulls* and *Where* (in her anti-disposable material homeland of Ontario), and *Elmer Abner & Her Wife*, C. Newman's *A Russian Novel*, John Mills' *The Land Of It*, and Robert Harlow's *Stones*. But of these five Harlow who looks as though he may yet take up Sheila Wilson's task of giving the province a mythical dimension beyond the



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